



## MINUTES

**Meeting of:** Adult Advisory Panel  
**Venue:** Brunel House, Old Street, St Helier  
**Date:** 10 October 2019  
**Time:** 11.00

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**Present:**

Deborah McMillan  
Tara Murphy  
Sam Idiong  
Sam Le Quesne  
Andrea Le Saint  
Maggie Atkinson  
Gailina Liew

Mike Graham  
Dragan Nastic  
Warwick Long  
Philip Gower  
Simon Hoffman  
Peter Green



**Apologies:**

Sally Johnson

Deborah McMillan opened the meeting welcoming the Panel to their first official meeting in statute. Introductions were extended from the Office of the Children's Commissioner and each of the Panel members.

It was acknowledged the office had been in operation for 21 months and recognising the significant journey to date.

█ and █ were thanked for all their hard work and commitment and wished well

**1. Minutes from meeting held 29 May 2019**

The minutes from the meeting held 29 May 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**2. Actions from meeting held 29 May 2019**

**a. Participation Models (Action 7)**

Participation model sent.

**Action discharged**

### **3. Terms of Reference (TORs)**

The panel received and noted the two sets of TORs. It was explained that in accordance with the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2019 the TORs for all panels should be consulted upon by the Chief Minister and the President of the Chairmen's Committee. Having been through this consultation process discussion was held around some of the suggestions made since the 29 May 2019 panel meeting:-

#### **Membership**

- "Membership is by formal invitation from the Children's Commissioner" - It was noted the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry Panel (IJCI), in their two year review report, had suggested something different and further discussion would be held at item 8.
- "Advisory Panel members must adhere to the seven principles of the Code of Conduct for those in Public Life (the Nolan Principles)" – Following discussion around what constitutes as public life it was suggested this read 'Advisory Panel conduct themselves in accordance with the Nolan Principles in their exercise as members of the panel.'
- "Membership of the Advisory Panel is 2 years". The Children's Commissioner has the option to extend." It was noted the Chief Minister felt this was too short, however it was agreed this would remain on the understanding that not all panel members would finish at the same time. Brief discussion took place around placing a limit around any extension and agreement that grounds for removal from the panel would follow the same process as formal invitation.
- Agreement to insert membership should be eight to ten members.

### **4. Operational Plan**

Members received and noted a copy of the Operational Plan August 2019 to December 2020. The plan brings together key projects, linked to the three strategic aims, with indicators of measurement and outcomes. It was recognised the plan would always be a working document subject to update and change. The Panel were taken through each of the projects which included a brief summary and the fact that some were in response to timelines with Government initiatives and plans.

Discussion was held with regards to some of the measures of impact:-

- Rights Respecting Schools Award – Unicef evaluation data. It was questioned whether this would include Jersey and suggested the office also collect its own data.
- Children's Rights Awareness – It was suggested to also include professionals in the evaluation measurements.

Further discussion was held around Article 24 and every child having the right to the best possible health care. This was acknowledged as being a key priority, particularly as seeing the GP is not a free service for all children. CRC Periodic reporting should enable this to become more of a priority through raising it as an issue

It was recognised the plan was ambitious, particularly given the current capacity of the office and a measure of progress as well as ambition would be

wise earlier than 12 months' time. Emphasis was placed around leads for the projects highlighting that Deborah would have overall executive responsibility for the plan so the lines of accountability should perhaps be reviewed. It was suggested a timeline Gantt chart of the operational plan would be useful. As this had already been completed a copy would be sent to the Panel.

**For action by:** ■ ■

## **5. Incorporation**

The Panel received and noted the presentation given by ■ ■ around incorporation of the UNCRC into Law. The presentation explained what incorporation means and why it is so important to embed the UNCRC into national Law and policy. Incorporation is a key project within the Operational Plan and the office will be working with and advising Government going forward.

## **6. Communications**

The Panel were presented with the Communications Strategy and advised a separate social media strategy would also be produced. The strategy will keep the office in a strong place to channel the voices of children and young people. It was noted other jurisdictions were using Instagram and that the office was keen to develop this. Discussion would be held with the Youth Advisory Panel with regards to playing a role in the social media messaging on the understanding there would be firm thresholds for comments. Emphasis was placed around the importance of what the office would want the general public to think and feel about any messages.

Discussion was held around the positioning of the office with regards to social media thinking about:-

- How we reach out to children and young people;
- How we reach out to parents – via schools tying in with the flagship Rights Respecting Schools project;
- The General Public;
- Government;

Further discussion took place around the current communications opportunities to include:-

- Strategic Plan;
- Operational Plan;
- Annual Report;
- QUB project – voices of children and young people telling us what it's like growing up in Jersey;

## **7. Youth Advisory Panel Update (YAP)**

The Panel were provided with an update in respect of the YAP highlighting that planned participation was a key project within the operational plan. There are currently nine members, two of which are new and had contacted the office directly. It was explained the office was looking at developing a

recruitment drive to increase members to at least 20 across an age range of 11-24.

The office would be represented at the Jersey Skills Fair on Friday 18 October 2019 providing excellent exposure and the opportunity to put out the message to children and young people that they have a Commissioner and what the office can do for them.

Discussion was held around the fact the YAP were still learning and developing how they can bring challenge and influence. A training package is being developed with them to enable them to train and mentor the new cohort of members. Going forward the plan is for them to Chair and set the agendas for their meetings as they have started to express areas of interest that they feel require development.

Brief discussion took place with regards to when panel members complete their term where it was clarified the plan was for them to become Ambassadors and Human Rights Defenders. It was recognised climate change would most certainly emerge, most likely during the children's lives in Jersey project, and the importance of full and meaningful participation around this topic.

## 8. **Independent Jersey Care Inquiry Two Year Review Report (IJCI)**

The Panel received and noted the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry Two-Year Review: Findings and Recommendations report. Overall the IJCI panel were very complimentary of the Office and felt that children and young people knew about it and how they can approach us. There were a number of other findings/recommendations within the report with regards to the Office and these were discussed as follows:-

- **“Introduction of a statutory right to raise a complaint about any aspect of Children’s Services”** – It was emphasised the role of the office was to ensure children and young people have a place to do this and would work with Government on child friendly mechanisms for making complaints.
- Commissioner’s right to make public an enquiry and the fact that the proposal that a **“duty be placed on the Chief Minister to make public response to the States Assembly, indicating what action is proposed to be taken”** had not been included within the legislation except where there has been a formal investigation Recommendation made to review this over time.
- **Recommendation that the right to access legal advice given by the Law Officers’ Department is systematic and only withheld where a public interest test is met for non-disclosure.** It was explained that the Protocol in place with the Law Officers’ Department allows for such requests should it be in the child’s best interest and public interest. The Commissioner can publish the fact the such legal advice was refused should she so choose to.
- Appointment process for Advisory Panels. **“We recommend that consideration be given as to how an independent element can be introduced to the appointment process for members of the Advisory**

**Panel**". Suggestion that the appointment process be overseen by the Jersey Appointments Commission. Deborah would put in writing as to the reasons why this would not be necessary, particularly given other jurisdictions do not do this and highlighting the importance of keeping the office independent.

- Arrangements for the removal of the Children's Commissioner from post. The IJCI felt a fairer process was required in that the Commissioner should be entitled to "**make representations in person during the in-camera session of the States Assembly**". As the Law clearly sets out the grounds for dismissal there was no real concern around this area.
- Terms of Reference – Removal of panel members. During the consultation process of the TORS it was suggested that the exact reasons for removing a panel member should be specified within them. Also raised was the overlap with the Safeguarding Partnership Board and the synergy between the two. A draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is already in place which requires some final refining as well as an MOU in place with the Jersey Care Commission. It was agreed the MOU's would be shared with the Panel once complete.

**For action by:** ■ ■

## **9. Annual Report**

The Panel received an update and overview in respect of the Annual Report. It was explained the office has a statutory obligation to produce the report. Brief discussion was held around compilation and accessibility of the report where it was suggested producing a report for Government, one for the public and for different age ranges. The YAP were also scheduled to contribute to the report.

**There being no other business the meeting concluded at 15.05**  
**Date of Next Meeting – 23 January 2020**