
Housing Policy Development Board (the 'Board' or the 'HPDB') Meeting 4
Tuesday 23rd July 2019, 09:00 – 11:00

Board:

Michael De La Haye, Independent Chair (MDLH) (Chair)
Minister for Children and Housing, Senator Sam Mézec (SM)
Minister for the Environment, Deputy John Young (JY)
Minister for Infrastructure, Deputy Kevin Lewis (KL)
Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources, Deputy Lindsay Ash (LA)
Assistant Minister for the Environment, Deputy Gregory Guida (GG)
Connétable of St. Mary, John Le Bailly (JLB)
John Scally, Independent Lay Member (JS)

Executive Support:

Strategic Policy, Performance and Population:

Sue Duhamel – Policy Director (SD)
Richard Jouault – Deputy Director, Social Policy (RJ)
Kevin Pilley, Strategic Policy, Performance and Population (KP)
Jack Norris, Policy Principal (JN)
Matthew Viney – Policy Principal (MV)

Treasury and Exchequer:

Jim Shilliday – Treasury (JS)

Specialist Advisors:

Altair Limited (Housing Consultants):

Steve Douglas CBE, CEO Altair Ltd (SDoug)
Sarah-Joy Lewis (SJL)
Cassidy Curls (CC)

Apologies:

Minister for Treasury and Resources, Deputy Susie Pinel (SP)
Deputy Carina Alves (CA)

1. Welcome and apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed all the attendees and conducted introductions. Apologies were noted from SP and CA.

2. Approval of Minutes and Matters Arising

2.1 The Minutes of the last meeting (11th June 2019) were agreed by the Board.

2.2 The following matters arising were raised:

- Foreign ownership of property. RJ advised that a draft paper will shortly be ready for review by the Board. RJ further noted that in preparing the paper it had highlighted the lack of data around the separating of local and foreign buy to let. RJ informed the Board that further research may be needed.
- JY indicated that at recent Island Plan meetings, housing and population had (thus far) been the two main areas of discussion raised by members of the public.
- KP provided a brief update on the next phase of Island Plan. He advised that policy development would be starting early in 2020 and it is important that policies emerging from the Board feed into this work, ideally by October of this year.
- Social Housing Rental Policy. JS provided an update. A meeting has been held with Andium Homes and various cost areas are being reviewed. SD noted that this was a complex area regarding flows of money in and out of the States, these money flows need to be properly analysed before proposals can be brought forward
- **Statistics Jersey - Young people statistics - has been requested.**
- Officers from Island Plan, Migration and Housing Policy Boards are meeting in the last week of July to establish timetables
- JLB - identification of sites for new housing. KP noted that the Island Plan would include a review of parish sites and requirements (space options), including access to the utilities infrastructure. The Chair recommended that the Board needs to decide on how these sites will be used i.e. what kind of development.

Action 1 – KP to ensure that the Island Plan consultation paper is circulated to the Board for their September Meeting.

3. Feedback from Statistics Jersey briefing – 13th (or) 14th June 2019

The Board briefly discussed the briefing from Statistics Jersey that members recently attended.

The principal areas of discussion were:

- A much more rapid proportional increase in house prices, when compared to RPI.
- The Chair noted that the percentage of owner-occupied properties seemed low (54%). The Chair enquired whether the Board were concerned about this figure, and whether or not they would want to see this figure higher?

SM observed that people, in general, aspire to ownership - but there is a decline in this as people aren't able to meet the costs of deposit due to high rents – security of tenure is the important thing.

JLB noted that overinflated market prices had the potential to drive people away from the Island

Chair recommended that as a long term objective, the Board needed to decide whether or not they would want the percentage figure to increase, or whether they felt that provided people were secure and happy, ownership was not a priority – but affordability was. JS referenced a pilot shared equity share programme may be a solution.

4. Government Plan update

4.1 SD provided an update on the progress of the Government Plan.

- The plan has been lodged today (23rd July 2019). It is a detailed 1 year financial plan, with an additional 3 years' worth of estimates.
- Housing falls under the "Income Inequality" section in the plan. In 2021 £10 million has been allocated to support affordable home ownership schemes through a ring fenced fund.
- In 2021 – 2023, a further £4 million has been ear marked for additional affordable housing projects.

The Government Plan process sets the overall budget available for government activities, the work of the Board will help to guide Ministers in the detailed decisions as to how the available funding will be used.

Action 2 - SD to circulate relevant page references to the Board for their information.

5. Review of access to social housing in Jersey

The final report of the review of access to social housing in Jersey was circulated. JN gave an overview of the paper.

- JN advised that the paper was published at the end of June, it included a review of the housing gateway¹ which has now been operating for 5 years.
- JN noted that the main points of recommendation were around policy and procedure and the potential of extending the eligibility criteria for social housing.
- The paper also discusses setting up a Housing Advice Service to provide guidance for people on their housing rights.
- The Minister will be publishing a response to the recommendations. This will be brought to the Board in the autumn.
- The Chair questioned the likely timescale to any changes to the Housing Gateway. SD advised that a staged approach would be needed and that some of the recommendations (for example, the advice service) can be implemented more quickly. Other areas will feed into the work of Altair and will inform their conclusions and recommendations.
- The Chair reinforced the point that the Board must identify who is in need of social housing and analyse the true scope of the matter.

JN advised the Board that the Homelessness strategy review was underway. The working group comprises representatives from government, housing providers and the third sector and this work is likely to align well with the recommendations of the access to social housing review.

JLB highlighted the apparent reliance on the 3rd sector in addressing homelessness.

¹ The housing gateway provides a unified waiting list across all social housing providers based on a common set of eligibility criteria

6. Affordability and Housing Supply in Jersey

- Presentation by Altair and Board discussion (briefing paper circulated with agenda)

The Chair highlighted that this work is in the discovery phase i.e. seeking to identify problems rather than discussing solutions.

- JAM - spoke to paper and summarised the findings for the Board. JAM advised that Statistics Jersey had supplied the underlying data used in the paper.
- Members raised a small number of issues in the structure of the paper that needed to be addressed. These were noted by the Altair Team and would be applied to a revised draft.
- The Board agreed to the list of actions/proposed next steps that were included in the summary of actions.

The Chair thanked JAM for the presentation.

7. Jersey Housing and the wider Economy - SDou

Presentation by Altair and Board discussion (briefing paper circulated with agenda)

- SDou presented the paper to the Board. The Board were advised that the paper had been structured to look for potential policy steers or policy interventions. It aimed to draw out the priorities of the Board.
- The Board reviewed the potential policy objectives.

There was broad agreement to the suggestions provided, however the following comments were noted:

- JY suggested a pro-intervention approach and was in favour of all the objectives that were noted, particularly a Government led loan scheme and the use of compulsory purchase.
- LA advised that he was in favour of larger housing developments rather than small numbers "here and there".

SDou noted that these suggestions weren't mutually exclusive and could be done side by side.

- JS stated that socio-economic benefits to the changes needed to be factored in. SDou agreed this would be added.
- KP noted that last Island Plan will have provided 4,000 homes. If there is a policy decision to build a significant number of additional units in the new Island Plan, this could require large scale changes to the Island. Making better use of the existing stock would help to minimise the scale of changes.
- JY noted that Altair's work must feed into the work of the Migration Board.
- JLB highlighted derelict greenhouse sites. KP confirmed that sites have already been redeveloped as social housing e.g. Samares Nursery.
- JS suggested the Board could meet in London with a Community Land Trust

8. Forward Plan & Future briefings for the Board

The Chair left the meeting at 11:00. SM Chaired the remainder of the meeting.

- Prior to retiring, the Chair drew the Board's attention to SDou's recent honour from Her Majesty the Queen in the 2019 Birthday Honours (CBE, for Services to Housing) – this was met with approbation from the Board.

There was a discussion (led by SDou) with the Board as to proposed briefings and work during next phase of the project. The following points were noted:

- SDou advised that Altair would liaise with the Migration Board and also feed into the Island Plan review.
- Altair would utilise the following factors when developing proposals - suitability i.e. policies that were a good fit to island, feasibility (fiscal), acceptability (political). All options will be analysed and tested, and any gaps would be identified.
- SDou noted that there may be a number of experts that could be consulted with, including - the former head of civil service in the UK, Lord Kerslake, and two policy makers who have served under both Labour and Conservative London Mayors. Each has experience in developing successful housing policies.

The Board agreed to this approach.

- RJ cited engagement with other stakeholders that have expressed an interest to feed into the Board's work e.g. the Children's Commissioner.
- JY emphasised the importance of KP and his team being involved to ensure a joined up approach with the Island Plan review.
- JN enquired what future briefings the Board would like to request. There was general consensus on receiving a briefing from SOJDC.

Action 3: SOJDC briefing to be arranged.

9. Documents for publication

- Minutes of 11th June 2019 (circulated with agenda)
- Development Barriers Report (circulated with agenda) - KP to review with Altair prior to circulation
- Ageing Population Report (circulated with agenda)
- Review of access to social housing in Jersey (circulated with agenda)

The circulation of these papers was agreed.

10. AoB

- None raised

The acting Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at **11:15**.

Actions

	Action required	Allocated to	Required by	Date completed
1	Island Plan consultation paper Is circulated to the Board for their September Meeting.	KP	19/09/19	
2	Circulate details of the relevant page(s) of the Government	SD	19/09/19	

	plan to the Board for their information.			
3	SOJDC briefing to be arranged.	JN		

Future Meetings:

- Thursday 19 September, 12pm-2.30pm, Broad Street, La Pulente Room.
- Tuesday 15 October, 10am-1pm, Broad Street, Petit Port Room.

Minutes agreed

Chairman:

Date:

Agreement for publication

Chairman:

Date:

Register of Actions from previous meetings

	No.	Action required	Allocated to	Required by	Date completed
Meeting 1 09/04/19	1	Officers to approach Mr. Scally about joining the Board.	JN/RJ	14/05/19	14/05/2019
Meeting 1	2	Social Housing Rents – Paper	JN/RJ		23/07/19
Meeting 2 14/05/19	3	Officers to look into how to link up with the Economic Framework Board	SD	04/06/19	
Meeting 3 11/06/19	1	The Board requested work on the high level policy objectives for Andium be included in Altair's work.	Altair	ongoing	
Meeting 3	2	Officers to liaise with Statistics Jersey in statistics in relation to young people and housing purchase.	JN/RJ	23/07/19	
Meeting 3	3	The Board requested work on downsizing incentives be included in Altair's work.	Altair	ongoing	

Meeting 3	4	Officers to circulate details of Caritas Annual Lecture.	JN	21/06/19	
Meeting 3	5	Planning and Environment Strategic Options Report to be circulated to the Board	RB	03/07/19	