



Office of the Chief Minister
Oik yn Ard-Shirveishagh

14 May 2018

Mrs D Caine MHK

by email

Hon Howard Quayle MHK

Chief Minister

DOUGLAS

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Dear Daphne

I am sorry you feel you have to resign from the post of Chief Minister's Children's Champion. I would like to thank you for your enthusiasm, passion and commitment to the role during your appointment. It is clear that you care passionately about the rights of all children in the Isle of Man and that is to be commended.

Where I believe our views differ is in the scope of the role. I believe your aspirations in including all children within your remit set you an almost impossible task. The Children's Commissioner in Jersey, which you cite in your email, has an estimated budget of £1.4m over three years and a headcount of four full time posts. Although we are not in the same position as Jersey, I do not think that a single role, particularly one which is on a part-time basis, would be able to effectively carry out their duties to a satisfactory level. Which is why I still believe the revised terms of reference provide a more focussed approach to the role of the Champion.

While the issues you raise in your email such as access to play facilities or service provision for Island children are important, they are also issues that are able to be raised by parents and other groups. Where I see the role of my Children's Champion adding most value is in providing a voice for those groups of children who do not have parents able to communicate on their behalf. In particular this means looked after and vulnerable children. I want this role to take up their cause and speak on their behalf to Government. Challenging those responsible for their care and making sure that their voice is heard by Officers and politicians. That is the reason for the revision of the terms of reference.

The landscape in the Isle of Man has changed since 2009. We have established a statutory safeguarding Board and this should be the forum where concerns relating to service complaints or children at risk should be raised.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you again for your commitment to the role of Children's Champion. I am sure that while we both choose different approaches, we both share the same aspiration that every child in the Isle of Man is able to be safe, happy and feels able to participate in our community.

Yours sincerely

Hon Howard Quayle MHK
Chief Minister