

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION ASKED BY
THE HON. G. WAYNE PANTON, JP - ELECTED MEMBER FOR THE
CONSTITUENCY OF NEWLANDS
TO
THE HON. JOHANY S. EBANKS, MP - MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR
PLANNING, AGRICULTURE, HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORT
AND DEVELOPMENT**

QUESTION:

Can the Honourable Minister say what has happened with the National Housing Task Force Report that was considered and adopted by Cabinet in 2023 and why no strategic actions have been taken to address the housing crisis in the Country other than the existing National Housing Department Trust functions which are inadequate?

ANSWER:

Mr. Speaker, the housing crisis in the Cayman Islands is a 'wicked problem' that cannot be contained neatly in the remit of any one ministry or solved in any one simple step as it cuts across different policy remits. As such, the Cabinet established the Inter-Ministerial Housing Taskforce to create a report and undertake the actioning of the recommendations by assigning them to the identified responsible lead ministries/portfolios.

Mr. Speaker, the recommendations in the Report are high-level policy options intended to guide ministries in developing detailed proposals, such as the comprehensive Public and Affordable Housing Policy. Therefore, to implement the recommendations, each responsible ministry was expected to utilise its expertise to undertake further evaluation, analysis, research and consultation to develop detailed proposals (including timelines, costing, and resources needed for Cabinet's further consideration and approval.

Mr. Speaker, I seek your indulgence as I take this opportunity to update this Honourable House on the steps the Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing, Infrastructure, Transport, and Development (PAHITD) is taking to address our country's housing crisis. As the Honourable House is aware, the Ministry of PAHITD embarked on a transformative initiative by contracting a public policy and management consulting firm to assist with developing the country's **first** comprehensive Public and Affordable Housing Policy and a forward-thinking 10-year Strategic Plan. This included a comprehensive stakeholder engagement, providing individuals from all three islands with the opportunity to provide us with a better understanding of their issues and share their feedback on the look and feel of this new policy and plan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to say that we are nearing the completion of this initiative, and I am extremely eager to present the completed policy and plan to my fellow Cabinet colleagues by the end of the year, as I seek their approval of this guiding document.

Furthermore, **Mr. Speaker,** I am pleased to announce that amendments to the Development and Planning legislation are also underway. The Ministry of PAHITD recognizes the importance this legislation plays in achieving our goal of affordable and attainable housing, and these amendments are expected to address some of the housing issues impacting our community.

Mr. Speaker, this further emphasizes that creating an overarching policy and plan is crucial to ensure that we, as a community, are moving in the right direction. I am proud to be part of the ministry that is in the process of completing this important initiative, which was never done before my tenure as the Minister responsible for housing.