

**JULIE GREEN—MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE**  
**Treatment Programs at South Mackenzie Correctional Centre**  
**Committee of the Whole—2019-2020 Capital Budget Review**  
**Dept. of Justice—October 26, 2018**

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, what I saw at Guthrie House and what the Minister's been describing are not the same thing. And so, it's resulted in considerable confusion for me. I want to just break it down into pieces. So piece number one is that Guthrie House is a separate entity, a fenced entity within a medium security correctional facility called the Nanaimo Correctional Centre. So it's separate. It is its own entity. Is that the concept for this therapeutic community in the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that is the concept. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Okay. Thank you. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Okay. Thanks for that clarification. Another key point about Guthrie House is that it is run in partnership with the John Howard Society. Who will be the partner in the South Mackenzie Therapeutic Community? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Goldney.

**MR. GOLDNEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The plan today is to have the programming delivered by the existing staff. We do recognize that the John Howard Society in British Columbia plays a key role in both the programming and the after-care. We do have, as it happens, staff visiting officials with the John Howard Society next week to talk about some of the training opportunities that might be available to support our own transition and to support some of the challenges or help address some of the challenges that we foresee in the after-care component of the programming. Some of those partners, we recognize, it may take time to find and build that capacity, but that is certainly an area of focus right now so we can be able to deliver the program as quickly as we can. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In order to be part of the Guthrie House community, the people have to -- the men, it is all men. The men have to have at least four months left in their sentence. They have to undergo drug testing and be committed to their sobriety using an abstinence model, an AA model. They also have to be assessed by their peers. The residents of Guthrie House have a lot of say over who comes in to Guthrie House and whether they end up staying there. Their job is really to ensure the fidelity of the community, that it lives up to its principles. Is that going to be the model used in the South Mackenzie? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes. We may have some differences from that exact model, but

generally speaking, it will be the same type of model. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The really important point about that model is that the inmates, or they prefer to be called residents, hold one another accountable for their behaviour and for their progress through treatment towards discharge, to finishing their sentences and being discharged. Is that the parallel that is being considered for the South Mackenzie where inmates hold one another responsible for their behaviour? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Absolutely. That is a key part of the therapeutic community that we are envisioning, so yes. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Okay. That is good news. Now, the other part that really impressed me when I was there is that the people in the Guthrie House were planning for their end of their sentence and their discharge back into the community pretty much from the time they arrived. Their most important piece to organize was accommodation, that they needed to find somewhere to live. That is where John Howard was very helpful to the inmates or residents, as I understand. How will that portion of reintegrating people who have achieved sobriety into stable housing and a stable situation, how will that part work? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes. I think all of us who had the opportunity of visiting Guthrie House were impressed by the after-care element in that there were organizations that were assisting and also graduates, if I can put it that way. Of course, initially, we won't have the support of graduates because, well, there won't be any graduates until we have our first class through, if I can put it that way.

Accommodation, yes. That is going to be an issue that we have thought about and do have concerns about, particularly those who are returning to some of the smaller communities where housing is a real issue. Perhaps Mr. Goldney can give his thoughts with respect to some of these after-care issues. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Goldney.

**MR. GOLDNEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do want to recognize that that is one of the challenges that we have identified. That is, frankly, a challenge we face now. We do work with all the inmates now to plan for reintegration almost immediately up their intake. We do work to try and set up inmates upon their release for the best prospects of success. You know, it often is a very difficult challenge. We do anticipate that there might be a greater receptiveness among community members and family for assisting these folks as they are coming out because they have demonstrated that personal commitment to seek those types of improvements.

I think it is a reasonable expectation that some of those challenges, at least one of

those key challenges of successfully reintegrating inmates, is, you know, there is often a reluctance to find accommodations. We think, by demonstrating that personal commitment to complete a program like this, that hopefully will address some of the barriers. We do recognize, though, that this will continue to be a challenge and something that we will continue to have to work on. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I would be interested to know if the department is working with the Department of Health and Social Services. They are working on this Addictions Recovery Action Plan, which looks at the recommendations that committee made about after-care, including not discharging people from an institutional setting, whether a jail or a treatment centre or a hospital, into homelessness. I am wondering if they are working alongside Health and Social Services on that issue. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Goldney.

**MR. GOLDNEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know we are working with our colleagues, and they have been involved in some of the program design work. I can't comment specifically on whether or not the release into homelessness and those supports have been addressed. I do know that we have been working closely with Health and Social Services and sharing not just our planned programming, but there is interest in some of the modular programming that we are delivering through Correction Services and Probation Services, as well. We do recognize that there is tremendous value in furthering that partnership. We do anticipate that as we try and address our shared challenges, that we will continue to work with Health and Social Services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think that partnership is really important. The people need the same kind of supports. They are coming from different places to after-care. They might be coming out of a treatment program rather than out of jail, but they need the same kind of services to maintain their sobriety and successfully reintegrate into the community. I am glad to hear they are working together. Just back to the beginning of this, which is the fence, how does the fence work into this? Is it necessary to make South Mackenzie into a medium-security jail? Or is it to section off the therapeutic model part? I am still not 100 per cent with the fence. Thank you.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes. The fence is needed to turn the facility into a medium-custody facility, just as Guthrie House is in British Columbia, which is part of the Nanaimo Correctional Centre. This is a necessary change if we wish to move to this model. As I say, we are optimistic about moving to the model, optimistic that we will get results. Thank you.