

November 15, 2017

The Honourable Lisa Dempster  
Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development  
Minister Responsible for the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities

Dear Minister Dempster:

I am honoured that you have agreed to serve the people of our province and welcome you to your role as Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development, Minister Responsible for the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation and Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities. I am placing my trust in you to support the protection of children and seniors in our province, ensure affordable housing for those in need and to advance social development, including reducing poverty and building inclusive communities.

As we approach the mid-point of our mandate, we have a strong Cabinet. We are guided by our plan for sustainability and growth, The Way Forward. It focuses on strengthening our economy and creating private sector jobs, delivering better services, improving outcomes to promote a prosperous Newfoundland and Labrador, and improving public sector efficiency. I am asking you to deliver on this plan by leading the following:

### **Supports for Children**

- Improving the performance of child protection services;
- With the review now completed, ensuring that the Youth Services Program meets the unique needs of vulnerable youth;
- Participating in an inquiry into the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system, engaging the federal government jointly with the Innu on that inquiry;
- Implementing child health risk assessments for school-aged children in collaboration with the Ministers of Health and Community Services and Education and Early Childhood Development; and
- Working with your colleagues and the Child and Youth Advocate to develop legislation for the House of Assembly that will make it mandatory to report deaths and critical injuries to the Advocate.

## **Supports for Individuals**

- Concluding a review of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation;
- Developing a comprehensive provincial housing plan that addresses the diverse needs of our residents and is consistent with our Housing First approach, paying particular attention to housing needs and support for the most vulnerable and those with distinct needs;
- Exploring new opportunities to partner with municipalities to retrofit subsidized housing in partnership with the Minister for Municipal Affairs and Environment;
- Working with advocacy groups and community stakeholders to promote a more inclusive province, including leading a review of existing legislation and regulations in the province with the goal of enacting a new inclusion-based Disabilities Act;
- Implementing healthy living assessments for seniors in collaboration with the Minister of Health and Community Services;
- Implementing an individualized funding model in partnership with the Minister of Health and Community Services and Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour, beginning with the provision of community support services in 2018;
- Implementing client-focused interventions to support individuals with complex needs; and
- Expanding housing and transportation services for seniors.

## **Community Sector**

- Partnering with the Minister of Finance to introduce one-window, multi-year community grants; and
- Partnering with the community sector to improve services and find efficiencies.

## **Healthy Living**

- Working with the Minister of Health and Community Services to develop and implement a healthy living action plan, which includes:
  - Increasing awareness and engaging individuals to take action for healthy living;
  - Creating communities that support healthy living in partnership with the Minister of Health and Community Services and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Environment;
  - Engaging schools to create settings that support healthy living and learning in partnership with the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development;
  - Promoting healthy eating habits through a combination of awareness campaigns and community outreach;
  - Focusing on chronic disease prevention and management program and an innovative youth wellness program;
  - Offering wellness coaching in schools beginning with Kindergarten children in consultation with the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development; and
  - Implementing anti-smoking programs, including support for organizations that offer smoking cessation programs.

Together, Cabinet is responsible for achieving the targets set out in The Way Forward. Achieving these targets is critical to attaining inclusive growth, improving employment levels and reducing poverty and realizing financial sustainability. To support reaching these targets, I ask all Ministers to consider the impact of their decisions on the health of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians through our Health in All Policies approach. You must also consider whether your decisions are best positioning our province for economic and private sector job growth.

As Premier, I expect you to be open and transparent. We must use evidence and research and engage with the public, stakeholders and our Indigenous partners to inform our decisions. We must ensure that we are focused on service excellence. I have asked all Ministers to reduce red tape, adopt Lean continuous improvement principles and publish business standards for all major programs by March 31, 2018. I also expect all Ministers to work together to support our commitment to being a government that is digital-by-design.

In fulfilling your responsibility as Minister, you must ensure collaboration, in a positive and constructive manner, with your Cabinet colleagues. I take this opportunity to remind you that, as you carry out your responsibilities as a Member of the House of Assembly and Member of Cabinet, adhering to the Code of Conduct and the Conflict of Interest guidelines are mandatory to ensure you discharge your duties with the highest ethical standards.

Deputy Ministers are your key source of support and will provide you with advice in meeting your responsibilities. I expect you to develop a positive, respectful and trusting relationship with your Deputy Minister and the public service.

At the end of the day, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians want to see results. You must track and report on your progress towards completing the work outlined in this letter. We will continue to highlight our progress in our annual Way Forward report cards and annual performance reports. Together, we will improve health, social and economic outcomes and deliver high quality services for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Sincerely,



**DWIGHT BALL**  
Premier