

31 The Parade, St Helier, JE2 3QQ
Telephone: +44 (0)1534 610 300
Email: info@jerseybusiness.je
www.jerseybusiness.je



Senator Steve Pallett
Chair, Migration and Population Review Panel
States Greffe: Scrutiny
Morier House
St Helier
Jersey
JE1 1DD

20th January 2022

Dear Senator, Pallett,

Ref: 0.116/2021

Thank you for your letter entitled 'Scrutiny Review of O.116/2021 – Common Population Policy' sent on behalf of the Migration and Population Review Scrutiny Panel and received on the 14th December 2021.

Is the proposed inaugural Common Population Policy fit for purpose?

This document outlines the general consensus, collated through research from many different individuals within the Island's community, that there is a need for appropriate controls to prevent Jersey's population from growing above a sustainable level. As a result, this inaugural policy sets out the framework needed to deliver long-term vision for Jersey's population which can be monitored and reported on in the short term. To the extent that it has built Ministerial consensus and a framework for implementation and reporting it is fit for purpose.

Is it the right course of action to commit future Council of Ministers to include its policy on population in Government Plans from 2023 onwards?

Any population plan needs to consider timespans well beyond any political term but equally needs to be flexible enough to allow short and medium term adjustments that meet what will inevitably be a changing social, economic and environmental landscape.

Did you have ample opportunity to take part in the formation of the proposed policy?

Yes, engagement with Jersey Business has been very proactive including the ability to convene industry round-table session to discuss the practical implications of policy changes. The presentations provided by Statistics Jersey on the current data available have been very helpful in informing the discussions.

Are there areas that the proposed policy does not provide guidance on?

Jersey needs a more detailed outline of the ongoing processes to gather, collate and report accurate data that shows us the current and changing population of the island. A regular and

ongoing presentation of this data along with census information should enable Ministers to react appropriately to any unintended impacts to the business community and islanders, whilst making rounded insights available to business and other effected parties.

What will the impact of the policy be?

Population control is complicated with many changing factors. The policy sets out the need for relevant data systems, skills development and expert and advisory panels to be created before setting a number on what the net migration target should be (if indeed referencing to a specific numerical target is the most appropriate metric). The effect of this inaugural policy should therefore be to create the infrastructure and information needed to aid future governments in setting appropriate targets/ metrics with which to assess the right balance for our needs.

What actions do you believe Islanders, businesses and the Government of Jersey need to take to meet the proposed policy?

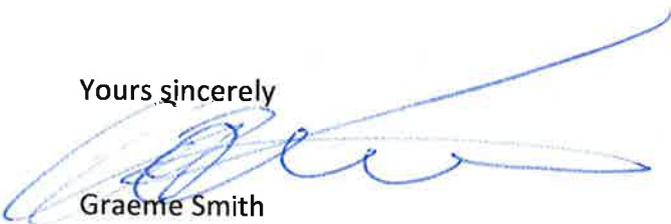
The Government actions for 2022 are already set out in the common population document. In relations to those actions, I would emphasise the need to include business leaders with industry experience and knowledge in the expert panel that will be formed to advise government.

Another 2022 action of note is the planned change in legislation to the Control of Housing and Work (CHW) laws. At the time of writing, there are 969 jobs advertised on www.gov.je, however we know that the actual number of vacancies are much higher than those listed on this one platform, there is clearly already a shortage of suitable workers. Changes to CHW law to remove automatic graduation after 5 years residency will mean previously permanent contracts will need to be fixed term for those without an entitled to work status. This will make attracting workers from the common travel area even more challenging. Businesses will need clarity as soon as possible on when and how changes to the current system for CHW will be implemented to enable them to plan effectively.

Is there sufficient rationale for the conclusion that it is premature to set any specific population target?

Yes, setting a target before the common population policy actions have been implemented and the detailed results from the March 2021 Census are available would not be sensible. Data is key, to both make that decision and in monitoring its effects.

Yours sincerely



Graeme Smith
Chief Executive Officer