



Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Quarterly Hearing re COVID-19

Witness: The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture

Friday, 13th November 2020

Panel:

Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence (Chair)

Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary (Vice-Chair)

Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour

Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier

Witnesses:

Senator L.J. Farnham, The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture

Mr. D. Houseago, Group Director, Economy

Mr. R. Corrigan, Group Director, Financial Services and Digital Economy

Mr. B. Harvey, Operations Manager, Sports Division, Growth, Housing and Environment

[10:33]

Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence (Chair):

Good morning. Thank you for joining us for this hearing, during which, although it is a quarterly hearing, we will use it principally for our COVID-19 response report, if that is okay.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

So we will be focusing mostly on those areas relating to COVID-19. As always when we start, we will start with introductions. Now, because this is all online, it will be easier, I think, if I just let you know who is with us rather than going around and asking everyone to mute and unmute and so on; it will likely fall apart. Minister, from your perspective, it might be easier if your officers just introduce themselves when they speak for the first time. On our side we have myself, Deputy Kirsten Morel, chair of the Economic and International Affairs Panel; we have the Deputy of St. Mary, David Johnson, who is vice-chair; we have Deputy Pamplin; we have the Deputy of St. Martin, Steve Luce; and we have Deputy Inna Gardiner. We are almost a full complement today, Minister.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Thank you. Of course I am here, Senator Lyndon Farnham, Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Brilliant. Excellent, thank you. I will just start off with a general question. In your view, how do you think Jersey has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020 in terms of the quality of our response? I am obviously, given the nature of this panel, looking at the economic response principally.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes. I think it was a bumpy start because, let us face it, we were all taken completely by surprise. I remember things back at the beginning, we all remember things were changing not just by the day, but almost by the hour as the global impact of the pandemic became apparent. The Island, I think, took a little bit of time to get to grips with it initially, but once we did and once we started to put our structures in place, for example, the test, track and trace resource and then we put the levels in relating to the level 4, level 3, level 2 and level 1 relating to the measures that were in place, I think we began to take control of things. So I think a bumpy start, but once we got into it, then I think we have coped very well, generally speaking, or Islanders, I should say, have coped extremely well and been extremely co-operative and demonstrated their fortitude, as is in the nature of Islanders. Of course we are now facing a second wave of the pandemic and I think we are in a much better place to understand how we deal with it. We are right in the middle now of flexing the current measures.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

We will ask you a few questions about that later on, Minister. Thank you. Related to that bumpy start, as you said, the first co-funding scheme was announced on 19th March. There were clear warning signs in February that the pandemic was heading our way, yet it seemed that preparations only really began in March. Do you think that more preparatory work could have been undertaken a little earlier in February?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

With hindsight, yes, and with total hindsight we could have started in the previous December if we knew what was coming, but with hindsight, I think we could have started a bit earlier. But I maintain the Government did their very best in the early stages to grapple with what was happening. With hindsight, yes, we could have been a bit more prepared, but we got there in the end.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Yes. Taking it on from there, I said that the first co-funding scheme - that very short-lived co-funding scheme, but a very important one - was announced on or around 19th March. Do you feel that in the end those support measures were implemented at the right time and also would you have done anything differently, obviously with hindsight? It helps for future similar situations.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Sure. I think they were implemented at the right time. I think that we could have announced them a bit earlier because of course there was probably a week of real business uncertainty when we started to go towards lockdown. I cannot remember the exact days and dates, but I remember nearly every minute of every day, every hour of every day was spent dealing with businesses, concerned businesses. The challenge then was giving reassurance to businesses that something was happening. They needed to know what was happening and when it was happening. We managed to introduce it in time, but we could have announced it earlier, but officers were ... you remember, because we were working with Scrutiny at the time and I think we were all just trying to make sure we had the very best option in place at that time. Of course it quickly evolved into phase 1, phase 2 and we are heading towards phase 3 of the payroll scheme now for the winter period.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Excellent, thank you. Now looking at the present situation, would you say that things have settled a little bit in the business community? What kind of feedback have you been getting?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Things had settled through the summer a little bit. Some business sectors had been and remain busy. Some businesses have been incredibly innovative and changed their business models to meet changed consumer demand. A number of businesses have restructured and planned to keep that new structure because they found when they were forced to restructure their business, they found new methods and processes that worked better for them. But right now we are seeing a lot more nervousness creeping back in. When we announced phase 2 of the payroll scheme, which meant it would slowly reduce, we did that at a time when we were not expecting the U.K. (United Kingdom) to be on total lockdown and our numbers to be ... well, perhaps we did expect a second

wave here, but we did not expect perhaps the U.K. to be on total lockdown. Of course our economy is directly impacted by that. There is some uncertainty now from businesses and that is why we are working right through the weekend now to announce the new tranche of measures on Monday. That will be accompanied by the relevant changes to business support, but I think it is important we get that message out there and quickly. We would have liked to announce some of the separate schemes a bit sooner, but we have been in an ever-changing situation, so every time there has been a big announcement, we have just had to hold them back to fine-tune them. I think Dan would like to say something, if that is all right.

Group Director, Economy:

Thank you, Minister. Morning, panel. Morning, Chairman. Yes, just ...

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Sorry, Dan, if you could just introduce yourself.

Group Director, Economy:

Can you hear me?

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Yes. If you could introduce yourself.

Group Director, Economy:

Just to support what the Minister has just said and hopefully to reassure the panel a little bit about the kind of approach that the Government are taking to engagement with the economy more broadly, I think it is fair to say that since March we have had quite significant engagement with all sectors of the economy through a various range of formal and informal conversations, meetings and so on and so forth. I think the biggest thing to say I suppose is that it has been quite collaborative. We have used Jersey Business in particular to effectively work in partnership with us to deal with particularly small and medium-sized enterprises and effectively to use them to sense check and ground truth some of the schemes that have been coming online, but then also to provide ongoing guidance around how to access that. I think one of the really good things that has happened has been the business intelligence that we have got. Historically, I think it is fair to say we have been focusing on the small businesses, but what we have seen as we have moved through COVID is much more engagement in the medium-sized enterprises as well. I think our kind of business intelligence and our reconnaissance around what is happening in the economy has improved significantly as that engagement has played through the system. We have had Jersey Business involved in the disruption loan guarantee scheme, assisting businesses, liaising with the accessibility of it and the co-funded payroll at each phase of that process, sense-checking guidance against business needs

and so on and so forth. We have had significant development with Jersey Business as the must go to site and they have been effectively signposting a range of grant schemes, activities and feeding back into Government around what the particular problems of certain sectors are. We have had over 300 consultations through Jersey Business with concerned employers and we have also started to try and assist with the issues around insolvency and how you troubleshoot businesses that are temporarily in trouble, but have probably got a viable future going on into 2021. We have also got a programme of work with Jersey Business in 2021 focusing on the sort of joint challenges of a COVID second wave potentially and also the end of the transition period and the end of the Brexit.

[10:45]

I just wanted to make the point that there is a hell of a lot going on just in Jersey Business, but we are also working with Chamber quite closely and specific sectors of the economy around some of the public health measures that need to be implemented that businesses need to be able to prepare for in advance. I think quite a lot is happening, Chairman.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Yes. Brilliant, thank you. Dan, just for the record, would you mind just stating your name and your position in the Government, just so the transcript can be correct?

Group Director, Economy:

I do beg your pardon, Chairman. Dan Houseago, Group Director, Economy.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Thank you very much. We will come back to ask a few more questions later on as well about the way you are gathering that intelligence and liaising with different groups. COVID-19 has obviously had a big impact on workstreams this year within the department. Were there any that you had planned to complete during the year but have not been able to because of the pandemic?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Dan, would you like to go there?

Group Director, Economy:

What was the question, sorry?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Workstreams. We are not going to be able not to complete any, but there have been delays. Dan can ...

Group Director, Economy:

Yes. Just from my perspective, we have pretty much managed to maintain most of the workstreams that we have been wanting to undertake. I think there has been some delay in some of our economic impact assessment associated with the end of the transition period simply because there had to be a reprioritisation around COVID initially at the beginning of the year, but having said that, it is quite an uncertain world, even in the Brexit space, where we are still trying to work out what the nature of the agreement with the U.K. and the European Union will look like, and indeed what further trade arrangements might look like for the rest of the world. So in actual fact, doing those economic impact assessments at this stage would not have yielded much information because we are not quite sure what we are aiming at and therefore what the economic impact will look like, but I think that is the main thing. I am quite proud of the team really, that we have managed to continue business as usual, but of course business as usual in Government was not really deliverable in the sense that there was not any business as usual in the outside world. But I think in terms of workstreams, I cannot think of one where we have not continued to deliver. That includes the Future Economy programme of course, so we have continued with that all the way through 2020 and we are on target and on budget with that.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Taking that a bit further, Dan - stay with us - what are the main areas that you are concentrating on at the moment outside of COVID?

Group Director, Economy:

I think the main one is the Future Economy programme. We are working towards the delivery of a new economic framework at the end of 2021, so we have a programme this year that is looking at several things. One is effectively an evidence review, so if we move into a policy development space next year, what evidence do we think is not available at the moment and are those gaps material in terms of economic policy development going forward? We are looking at preparing supply use tables so that we can properly understand the interrelations with the economy, so if we invest £1 here, what impact it has elsewhere in the economy. I think that is going to be a hugely useful tool for officers and politicians to assist in understanding the impact of future interventions in the economy. We have done some deep dives into retail and hospitality so as to understand, in a sense, the particular needs of those sectors on the basis they have probably suffered the most detriment through COVID. We are looking also at how we prepare the ground for the skillsets that people might need in the future and potentially a reset of the economic sort of picture and environment. Finally, we are looking at what does this all mean in terms of the policy development piece in terms of what effectively a plan for industry more broadly looks like going forward as we take that next step towards the economic framework at the end of the year. I think it is worth saying and reiterating that

the Future Economy programme has effectively got 4 elements to it, work package one, which is the kind of preliminary work in understanding the tools we need and the evidence that we require to make evidence-based policy. Then there is the policy development piece itself and leading to the economic framework itself and then a delivery plan following from that into 2022. This is of course all embedded into the Government Plan. We have got other pieces of work ongoing. We have got an arts strategy being developed this year. We have got a review of the Rural Economy Strategy and the preamble around that. The other big piece of work is trying to prepare ourselves for the end of the transition period and what that means for businesses as well and what are the options for Ministers and the Assembly in terms of whether we want to engage with the agreement that the U.K. is having with the E.U. (European Union) and the trade arrangements.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Yes, absolutely. One piece of work I think that was brought up in the States recently via a proposition was the productivity plan or strategy. I think there has been a deadline of April - correct me if I am wrong - 2021 to deliver that. Are you still on course to deliver that?

Group Director, Economy:

Yes, thank you, Chairman. I beg your pardon, I forgot to mention that. That is a part of work package one, so what we are doing is designing a productivity scheme this year. It will be ready by the end of this month, the sort of scheme nuts and bolts, on the basis that we need to be ready to hit the ground running first thing in 2021. Effectively, if you have got £1 to spend to increase productivity, where would you spend it? I think it is trying to work out what does that look like in terms of a structure and in terms of a scheme. We have obviously got money embedded in the Government Plan for this. I think it is £500,000 specifically for that scheme, but of course we do also have embedded in the Government Plan £15.5 million of recovery funding, which of course also could be geared towards productivity. I think as long as we get the design of the scheme right this year, we should be on track to deliver in advance of April next year.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Excellent, that is really good to hear. Thank you. I am now going to hand over to the Deputy of St. Martin, who is going to ask a few questions about the impact on the economy of COVID.

Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin:

I think Deputy Pamplin just wanted to follow up with a question on your last one there.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour:

Yes, thanks, gentlemen. Minister, just while we were looking backwards and obviously with hindsight, could you take us back to those early days? What was the biggest tension you faced?

You mentioned just before how unprecedented it was and how surprising it was. Could you just take us back to those early days? What were your biggest tensions and your biggest issues in getting things done quickly enough, being faced with this unforeseen pandemic?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

The absolute biggest priority for my department was business support. I think it is that straightforward, the impact on businesses right across the economy was sudden and very big. For me, it was getting that support right and getting it out there quickly enough and it did take us a little bit of time to get the momentum going with that, but beyond doubt that was ... and it still remains the number one priority now as we face a COVID winter.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Because the lockdown was a thing that came along which nobody had ever encountered before and it was all new to everybody, so how much lead-in time did you have? Because obviously the lockdown was a blunt tool for public health reasons, as we know, but for you, when did you know that was going to be happening so you could start escalating plans? Because that was the key moment. That changed everything.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I would need to open my calendar and look at the exact dates, but it was all around ... I think it started in earnest sort of mid-March, when it really started to ramp up quickly. I cannot remember the exact dates, but at that time. It happened very quickly.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

I am just trying to map it out for everybody, because obviously it was a moment where you had to act fast, make sure that you were getting people in that you needed to hear from because of the impacts of this unknown thing that had never happened before. That scientific advice and the advice that we are now getting used to, you saw that early days so you could make those early decisions, because I guess the earlier you can make those decisions the less of an impact, if that was ever possible. It is just going into that timeline of how much time you knew, when you were aware and what steps you could put in place.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Like I said, I do not have the exact dates off the top of my head, but it involved almost around the clock working at the time. We saw a huge dedicated input from officers from all departments, who came together very quickly under the new structure. We were saying recently we were very fortunate that we had had that restructuring in place and that consolidation of premises. We had far more officers working in Broad Street. Those officers were previously distributed around the

network, so the new structure and the fact that many of us were under one roof was incredibly useful at the time. I cannot give you the exact dates off the top of my head, but we remember roughly the period, 13th March I think was the sort of D-Day, I think, something like that.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Thank you, Minister. Let us head back to the sunny shores of St. Martin.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I will take my sunglasses off. Thank you, Deputy. Minister, COVID obviously puts you, as well as many others, in a difficult spot. On one hand you have the health of the Island and on the other hand you have the economy of the Island. We are seeing cases rise again at the moment. What measures do you think are going to have to be taken to combat that increase? Similarly, how are those new measures likely to impact the economy of the Island?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Can I just comment about health and the economy? Both are intrinsically linked because we all know that our health and well-being is linked to a strong economy, having full employment and sort of meaningful livelihoods. We have seen once we start to lose that or have that threatened, then that has a very quick impact on our health and well-being as we start to understand about mental health and the physical side effects and impacts of that related to the impact of COVID. There has been a balance and it is always a great debate about how many lives we might be costing and how many lives we might be saving. That has been a very difficult balance, but I am pleased to say there has been a very good, I think, juxtaposition between the Government and the medical advice and the States. I think we have had excellent advice from S.T.A.C. (Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell). Just like we have learnt throughout the pandemic, I think we have got better at reacting to it as the States Assembly and as a Government, and so have the medical advisers. They have come to understand more about medical science and now understanding more about it, that advice, I think, has got better. There has always been, I think, a very important and healthy tension there. We have had to provide a balance and I think we have accomplished that or achieved that very well. I think the second part of your question was about what we are going to be doing now going into the winter.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

The nub of the question was where do you think we are going with measures to keep the increase in the virus that we are seeing now under control and how will that affect the economy?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

We had to move quickly to quash rumours over a lockdown. There were rumours in the Island that peaked yesterday that there was going to be a lockdown. There are no plans for a lockdown, but there are plans for further measures to be introduced next week. The competent authority Ministers are still considering the advice from S.T.A.C. S.T.A.C. have another meeting today and we expect to be making the final decisions on those measures over the weekend. I understand the Chief Minister and the Minister for Health and Social Services will be making the announcement and sharing the detail at a media conference on Monday. But the strategy now is to target the measures where we can contain them. We are fortunate to have a really good test, track and trace resource. One of the concerns is that we want to make sure that resource remains capable of dealing with the increase in numbers, because every positive test we get, there is an average number of direct contacts, so we need to have the resource in place to make sure we continue to manage the contact tracing so contacts in direct contact can take the appropriate action. So part of the strategy is focused on making sure we increase those resources as we need them and then we are going to sort of introduce further measures that will help keep Islanders safe.

[11:00]

But rather than give you half the detail now, I think we need to wait until Monday. States Members had a presentation yesterday where the general themes of what we are planning were shared and we are just fine-tuning those now. I believe these measures might be difficult for some sectors of the economy, but I think generally they are sensible.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

We will not press you on what might be coming in the future, but do you think people are seeing the Government response as an over-reaction, given the number of people we have in hospital or do you, on the other hand, feel that maybe we are being complacent because we see the Island in a much better place than many others - in fact, all the others - around us?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I think many of us have different views. I think most Islanders have different views and most Islanders have different appetites to risk. Often that will be based upon their own circumstances. What we must never lose track of though is those who are most vulnerable in our society. At the beginning of this, when we were expecting potentially a much worse situation in relation to the health of Islanders, that was a catalyst for the putting the temporary Nightingale wing up at Millbrook. We were planning for hospitalisation of perhaps hundreds of Islanders. That clearly is not going to be the case and we are now focusing on minimising the number of positive results. I think we have got the balance just about right. I am perhaps more inclined towards the importance of Islanders' health based on good economic circumstances. For example, the figure we have now, approximately half

of the positive tests are in the under-29 age group, so that shows it is spreading through our younger members of the community and they are considered to be considerably less at risk than the older members of the community. I think the measures are going to be more targeted towards those who are more vulnerable to protect them and enable many of us to go around our lives in as normal way as possible. I think we are likely to see, as we know, the legislation introduced that will give the authorities powers in relation to public gatherings and the wearing of masks. I think we have got the balance about right. My inclination is leaning towards more economic well-being.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Moving on then, this week you may well know one of the large businesses that operates out of the complex at the Powerhouse at the top of Queen's Road had to close for half a day because of staff shortages due to COVID. Is that something that you think we are going to see more of? I think also obviously of the pressures on staff, the stress of working under COVID, the stress and complications of having to look after other family members who may be isolating or need to be isolated and the fact of positive COVID tests themselves. Is the closure of shops for short periods of time something you think we are going to have to get used to?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I would certainly hope not. Let me just go back to the first question about staff shortages. The payroll support scheme was aimed not just at protecting business, but protecting jobs and livelihoods. I believe if you look at the figures, they sort of speak for themselves. Although we have seen an increase in those actively seeking work and that peaked at over almost 3,000, that has come down now to about 1,400, so that is coming down very gradually. We did see 3,000 or 4,000 as the best estimate of people leaving the Island and returning to their home countries at the start of this. Those tended to be workers in tourism and agriculture and, in some instances, retail. That did leave a shortage in those areas. That is one of the concerns now, that any curtailing of business opening hours would result in businesses having to lay off staff or reduce hours, which could result in some of these people returning to their home countries. When we come through this, we could have a shortage in our labour pool, which could hinder the reopening of some sectors of the economy, so it is a concern.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

But one part of that last question was around workers in retail particularly getting ill from COVID and the establishment having to close because of the shortage of staff. What is your personal view on the wearing of masks in shops? Because surely one case might be the fact that we should be protecting retail workers by making sure that everybody who enters a retail premise has a mask on.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes, that is strong advice, and I tend at this stage to concur with the advice, which is why the States are being asked to introduce that in legislation. It is strong guidance now and I am pleased to see a majority of Islanders complying, but still some are not. But I understand also some shops are denying access to customers if they do not wear a mask, so I am following the medical advice on that at this stage.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Do we have any numbers, Minister, on footfall in town or spending decisions, the amount of money that is being spent in retail as the second wave starts to take effect? Do we know how it affects the number of people going into the shops and visiting town?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes, we do. All the footfall figures are published, I believe. I get an update every week. I am looking at them now. I can share them with the panel if you like, but footfall figures are still considerably lower than the same period last year. They sort of practically disappeared when we went into lockdown, of course, and have been coming back. From the end of September they were 40 per cent down. At the end of October, they were 20 per cent down and continuing to improve, but since we have moved, since things have changed over the last week or 2, that increase in footfall in town has stabilised, but we are roughly about 20 per cent down.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Is there anything else you think that retailers could do to encourage shoppers into town for the Christmas festive period and have you got any plans within your department to assist with that?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes, we have. We have just provided funding to the Parish of St. Helier, who are announcing a package of measures to support town retailers next week. That will cover a number of areas, but I will leave the Parish to announce that when they are ready to do so.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Will you be asking for help from other Ministers? For example, will you speak to the Minister for Infrastructure about free car parking?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes, I have a meeting planned with the Minister for Infrastructure on Monday to discuss a number of issues. I do not want to take him by surprise, but a period of free parking was something I was going to suggest to him on the run-up to Christmas at certain times.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I do not want to talk things down, Minister, but we seem to lag behind everywhere else. Hindsight is a wonderful thing: we can see what has happened in Europe, we can see what is happening in the U.K. The lag I am talking about here is how our second spike may come 2 or 3 weeks after the U.K. one. How do you see Christmas this year for Islanders and retailers?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Gosh, I had not thought that far ahead from a personal perspective, but I think we have seen tremendous fortitude and resilience from Islanders. I think Islanders have made a really good go of the challenges we have had. I think it is going to be harder on younger members of our society, our young people. We have all got children - and grandchildren in certain instances, not my instance just yet - and I think those are probably the groups that are going to find it hardest because they love to socialise and have parties and spend a lot of time at Christmas. Normally the students come back and they like to have a good time. Of course that potentially might not be possible in the way they have been used to. I think perhaps the older members of society will deal with it better. I think we will all still be enjoying good family Christmases. Of course there are restrictions on the numbers that we can have in gatherings and groups and in homes. That number could be amended as we move towards Christmas, but I generally think we are in a very good place for Christmas, but our younger people will probably find it hardest.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

A final question, if I might, Minister, before we move on to specifics of tourism. It is a very general question. It almost does not really need to be asked, but where in the economy do you see the greatest damage long term? Which parts of the economy do you see the greatest positives and the new initiatives? Which bits do you think are going to come out of this best, fastest and quickest and which bits will be affected for the longer period of time?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Hang on, I am just reaching for my crystal ball that I put down here.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

You know, we have taken to remote working, which is something I guess is a positive maybe.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Let us start with remote working. That was something that was coming, but perhaps COVID has sped that up by 2 to 3 years. That in some instances works incredibly well. This time last year, if we had thought we would be having public Scrutiny Panel hearings like this, we would have just not believed it. That in turn has caused advances in science and technology. We have seen the

programmes and the software we are using improve significantly in recent weeks and months, so I think there are going to be really interesting and positive improvements in technology. Of course one of the risks that comes with that is how that impacts on the number of physical jobs required. Then we talk about artificial intelligence and we are doing some work now to see how that might impact, but I feel positive about that, because the conversations I have had with experts in those areas suggests that we will see people replaced, not necessarily displaced, but replaced potentially with higher-skilled working requirements. That is why education and skills is such a key aspect of the economic work we are doing now. One of the things I think we have done with the payroll support, hopefully the States will approve fiscal stimulus, but then we have the bank loan guarantee scheme, we have had the Social Security and G.S.T. (goods and services tax) payments and there are other schemes about to be announced to help the hotel accommodation sector and events and other businesses who have been hardest hit by the guidelines. It means that we have managed to keep the vast majority of the economy intact, so it will be ready to deal with the uplift when it comes next year. The importance of having schemes, for example, a big concern if we move to tourism is the hotel accommodation sector, which stands at about 10,000 beds. Now, the tourism strategy was based upon increasing visitor numbers, but not necessarily in the summer, but spreading the increase across the year so we become more productive and use up some of the economic capacity we have in the winter. It is really important. That sector has been the hardest hit - or one of the hardest hit, if not the hardest hit - the hotel accommodation sector. It is important we retain those really vital strategic assets because we all know the highest return on land use at the moment is in residential accommodation, so these hotels, many of them take up very large tranches of land and are extremely valuable for that use. I would hate to lose some of those key assets, notwithstanding that we do need new housing. But if we were to lose some of those key assets, especially those in tourism destination areas, then I fear they would be gone for ever, so we want to make sure we keep as many of those as possible. I know you asked a number of other questions, but ...

The Deputy of St. Martin:

So the answer to my question about permanent damage and scarring and which part of our economy might be most affected, I guess then, without wanting to put words into your mouth, the answer is hotels and hospitality.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

That is certainly a risk. We have to get them through the winter intact so they are ready to take advantage of the uplift when it comes. These businesses are quite heavy on running costs. When there are no people staying there and when there are restrictions and other measures, it is very difficult, which is why we are planning additional support.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Okay, thank you. I am going to hand over to one of the other members to take over on tourism.

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier:

Thank you and good morning. I would like to continue with tourism. Can you please advise how the activity level dropped compared to the summer? Yes, probably it has dropped now. Do you have any numbers?

[11:15]

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I do not know if I have got the latest visitor numbers in front of me. Right now transport is about 95 per cent down, but that is no surprise. We saw some improvement in the summer, but that was the number of arrivals were still running at about 60 per cent, 70 per cent down on the previous year. I think the overall detriment on the sector for the whole year will be well in excess of 50 per cent, but some businesses in those sectors which are more reliant on the summer trade are showing detriment of 90 per cent plus, so that is the sort of territory we are in.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

You are in discussion with the hospitality industry. What part will the industry play to adjust their operations to cope with the downturn in the industry?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

First of all, if you look at it, you have got sort of hotels, bars and restaurants, if we split it into those categories. Those seasonal hotels are probably suffering significant detriment and have had to close, but maintain key staff, or if they are open they are open with very few staff. I think that is really important for the sector, having the support to retain their key staff through the winter because once those key staff are gone, they are very difficult to get back and then they are difficult to train again. A lot of our hotel businesses and hospitality businesses have staff that have longstanding service and would be very difficult to replace, so that is one of the key concerns. I think bars and restaurants are slightly different. We can look at some examples that have traded extremely well, maybe the recently developed beachside restaurants have been doing particularly well because they rely on lunch and early evening trade. But the bars, I think the public house sector has been hard hit because they are having to do a spaced table service, which has impacted on the numbers of people using the establishment, and the same applies for restaurants. Of course I think the sector is very nervous because Christmas is normally hugely important for not just hospitality but for retail. There is uncertainty about what will happen at Christmas, what they will and will not be able to do. Of course we are watching the numbers closely and we will wait for the announcements on Monday to be able to give certainty on that.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you. Do you think the low numbers of cases in the summer had a positive impact on tourism levels and if any analysis has been undertaken on that?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Have any what been undertaken?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Any analysis, like any calculations.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

First of all, I would say I do not think any business has had a really good summer. I mean, most businesses have been in survival mode. They had a couple of good months, but really they were recuperating the serious losses that they had in April, May and June. Despite seeing some recovery in July and August if you look at their year-to-date positions they are still really poor and we are working closely with Jersey Business, Jersey Hospitality, the Chamber of Commerce, to understand exactly how that looks. When we have been compiling the hotel support scheme and the revised payroll schemes we have gone out to the sector through PwC or Grant Thornton, one of them, and I am looking at Dan now to see if he can confirm, or Richard. Perhaps if I can just turn to Richard if he is still there to explain some of the methodology for collecting financial data from the sector.

Group Director, Financial Services and Digital Economy:

Thank you, Minister. Richard Corrigan, group director for Financial Services and Digital Economy. As part of the analysis of support packages for the hospitality sector a number of businesses were asked to contribute financial information into a portal that was administered for us by Grant Thornton under contract and that has helped us with the design and analysis of the hospitality support measure, which we hope to brief the panel on very shortly ahead of a formal launch.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Those figures will show in nearly all circumstances very significant detriment.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

A couple more questions. We have heard that Visit Jersey stopped collecting data over the lockdown period. Can you confirm or did they continue to collect data? Will we see any data coming out from Visit Jersey?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

They are still carrying out their exit survey but there is very little input to that at the moment because we have so few people travelling. As I understand it they have been continuing to run that data but I can seek confirmation from them in case something has changed recently.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

It would be good to see the data presented by the end of the year. Did you assess income generated from tourism during the summer months since the borders were opened or, if not, are you planning to assess what income is generated from opening the borders and tourism?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes, we will be looking at that very closely because I think that information is going to be very helpful when we look at the rationale, for example. We made a strong economic argument for opening the borders, not just economic but Islanders' general health and well-being. We are going to want to know what the impact of that was. I think over and above the pounds, shillings and pence that that produced, as I said earlier, the important thing is we have enabled these businesses to stay in business and be able to take advantage of the economic recovery when it comes, hopefully in the first quarter of next year.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Absolutely, so it will be dependent on how we will go through December and Christmas and which way COVID will affect us. Last evening British Airways confirmed that they will be suspending the Jersey-Heathrow flight from 16th November until the end of the lockdown period, 2nd December. It will have a major impact. What negotiations continue with British Airways and how do we ensure links are kept for the Islanders?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

We have worked very closely with British Airways and easyJet and all of our airline partners through this. The fact that we managed to keep our air and sea links operational most of the time caused us to have an even closer working relationship with our partners than we normally do. That has strengthened our relationship with them and we are working very closely. That is why British Airways informed us yesterday of their decision to temporarily postpone the Heathrow service until the U.K. came out of lockdown. We still have 4 flights a week running with easyJet and a daily Southampton service with Blue Islands, and I have instructed officers to prepare to activate the contract that we have with Blue Islands to maintain our lifeline air links in the run-up to Christmas, should it be necessary. You will have also heard from the Assistant Minister for Education that plans have also been made with Blue Islands to ensure there are additional flights to bring students home, and details of those will be available soon. I think those flights will go online so they can be booked imminently.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

We can see that the British Airways decision was announced to us 3 days before it came into force. Is that something that we might consider taking forward for our decisions connected to the airlines, that the 3-day announcement might be sufficient for the airlines to adjust their operation?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I am not sure I understand the question.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

The question is very simple. When we have had different discussions within the States we have been told that we need at least 7 days for airlines to prepare their change of operation, even if it is a minor change, and we considered British Airways came to us 3 days basically saying: "We are stopping flying" so is it something that you can take up with the airlines for further considerations and negotiations that an announcement from our side can also be reduced to 3 or 5 days, shorter periods of time?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I think it is responsible practice for Jersey to give as much notice to its transportation partners as it possibly can. Ports of Jersey are in daily contact with our airline partners and since the U.K. region started to turn red and then since the Prime Minister's announcement on 31st October about the U.K. lockdown we have been in daily discussions with British Airways. They have been saying for the last week or 10 days it is likely to happen and it was last night that they confirmed that they were going to be doing it from 16th November, and I wrote to all States Members within an hour to inform them. It is because we have that close working relationship, but the point is taken.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you, Minister, it is really helpful and thank you for emailing us. The last point on hospitality, as you mentioned we have an effect on our workforce, maybe 4,000 people have left the Island, when we are looking at the total numbers from the last week people registered as actively seeking work it shows 1,470, 540 higher than a year earlier. So we have almost 1,500 people actively looking for work in Jersey. What are you planning to do with training or any programmes to make sure that before we look for people outside of Jersey we maximise the 1,500 people who are actively looking for work currently on the Island?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

That is a good question, but it is probably addressed to the wrong Minister, I am pleased to say, because the Minister for Social Security is responsible for the actively seeking work programme. I

know there are a lot of very good programmes in place but I do not have the details of them in front of me. What I can say is that the sectors that are looking for work, including hospitality, are doing everything they can to bring those actively seeking work into their businesses, but we know it has never been a preferred choice for Islanders to work in hospitality. Having said that, a very big part of our hospitality and retail industry are Islanders. It is not just in hospitality, it is not just chefs and waiting on tables, it is marketing, accountancy and management and all sorts of vital skills required. It has been difficult in the past to retain Islanders in front line hospitality and agricultural roles and it is something we are still trying to address. Our new migration policy that was announced I think will help that because we are looking at 9-month permissions, 4-year permissions and 10-year permissions. That means both sectors should be able to import staff for the jobs they cannot fill locally without having a long-term impact on the population. I know that was a bit of a longer answer to the straightforward question that you asked but in terms of what we are doing to get those people back to work it is the Minister for Social Security.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I have taken your point. You mentioned, and I agree with you, we have difficulty retaining our local people in hospitality and agriculture and one of the reasons is due to the very low pay that the local people do not agree with. Is it within your remit to look into the policies that can incentivise and maybe support local businesses that will be able to pay higher wages to retain locals in these industries? Basically can you support businesses to retain them in these sectors?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I am not sure it is just the low pay. A well-known and one of our favourite restaurant chains who pay a living wage have worked very hard to engage local workforce and increase the local workforce. Even with their different working pay structures they have found it very difficult to retain staff. I do not think it is all about pay. I think a lot of it is about the type of work and the shifts and the weekends and so forth, but I am going to hand over to Dan now, who would like to add something to that.

[11:30]

Group Director, Economy:

Thank you, Minister. I think a broader contextual piece is around how the department is aiming to deliver on our Common Strategic Policy priority, which is around sustainability and a vibrant and inclusive economy. One of the key cornerstones of that work is to develop a highly-skilled workforce equipped for the jobs of the future. While we are dealing with an immediate problem we have also got to look at the medium and long-term context as well and the Future Economy programme led by the Ministry is very much looking at that to try to improve the analysis of and the access to tailored and targeted information about what future job skills and pathways look like, leading towards an

economy-wide approach to access to learning and upskilling pathways for all those people and, in particular, people who are unemployed at the moment. We are trying to analyse and define what an upskilling initiative might look like but that does to a certain extent require the definition of what the future workforce would look like and of course to some extent that is tricky in the midst of a pandemic and a potential second wave. We do need to look at matching jobs and training to engage these people going forward and it is very much a fundamental part of the Future Economy programme and to train the new competencies, and then to start to monitor a bit more effectively how the workforce operates and responds in the recovery phase.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Can I apologise? I inadvertently misinformed the panel. The exit survey was suspended earlier but all of the detailed passenger arrival figures are continuously being collated. I wanted to correct myself.

Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary:

Good morning, Minister. David Johnson here. First of all forgive me if I do not put my camera on. I am properly dressed but due to temporary spectacle problems I have to screw my face up to read what is in front of me, so perhaps I can continue on that basis.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes, please do.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you. We have already touched on this in our earlier questions, but can I go back to the general question of COVID response? What COVID-linked groups have you set up with businesses? For instance, we understand that a construction industry response team was established at the beginning of the pandemic. Were there any others?

Group Director, Economy:

Good morning, Deputy. There are a wide range of COVID response groups that include a range of sectors. Construction is one. There is a specific COVID response hospitality group. We have been talking to agriculturists, we have been talking to fishermen around how we help them through the crisis, and we have been working very closely with Jersey Business and the Chamber of Commerce, who have been helping us manage feedback into Government about the impact of COVID but also how businesses support the Government in the public health programme and initiatives as well. There is a very broad range of activity, the most recent being retailer engagement with the head of Public Health and economy colleagues really looking at the implications of forward-looking, the implications structurally and financially of what public health measures coming down the track will

mean for things like retail. There is an incredible amount of work going on in partnership with representative bodies and individual businesses as well. Not all of them are led by Government. Some of them are led by the sectors themselves, but I think it is fair to say that there is an awful lot of engagement going on at the moment.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thanks for that. Are you concerned that there are certain sectors that are not represented at the moment, whether through an organisation because they are too small, or do you think you have covered the board?

Group Director, Economy:

Because of the excellent officers of Jersey Business we are covering off small and medium enterprises in a way that we have never done before and I think genuinely are reaching parts of the economy that we have never really been in contact with. The other point is we do get a lot of feedback and queries around eligibility for things like the co-funded payroll scheme, so we do start to pick up granular issues in the economy through feedback and eligibility questions around the various economic support packages that we have. We have engaged with a range of businesses and companies, sectors, individuals, that we would never have normally talked to. I think we are getting a lot of feedback and we are picking up some of the granular stuff that we had not done in the past.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you. My next question was to do with the future but, from your comprehensive reply, effectively you are saying that the momentum as to consultation with many of the groups has grown from day one and that is continuing apace. Is that fair enough to say?

Group Director, Economy:

Absolutely, Deputy.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you. Going back to the early phases of the pandemic, a business liaison group and economic taskforce were formed. What happened to these groups?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Those groups evolved into the Future Economy Political Oversight Group and a subgroup of that has been established, the Economic Council, which I chair. That is a group of Islanders from most aspects of the economy, highly-skilled Islanders in their individual sectors, and has carried out a really comprehensive piece of work. Their paper is due to be published at the beginning of

December. We met earlier this week, I think it was Monday, and we started a process that will see that paper run through various channels of consultation, including with Scrutiny before going to the political oversight group and then being published. The short answer to your question is it evolved into the Future Economy Political Oversight Group and the Economic Council.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thanks for that. I rather sensed that. So going back, the Economic Council in effect has taken over the roles originally intended. You touched on the ongoing work. Could you again emphasise how soon we might be getting some sort of report as to what has happened through the auspices of the Economic Council?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

The Economic Council paper, which is a visionary, forward-looking paper, new perspective-type outlook deals with immediate, medium and long-term suggestions. That paper is due to be released in early December, once it has gone through its formal process, the final consultation with stakeholders' process, which is happening now. Does that answer your question?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

To some extent; so I wanted to clarify where we are with it. I am not sure there is too much information coming out.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

It is in its final draft, so it is ready for completion and then the Future Economy Political Oversight Group blends into the workstreams of the economic framework that Dan explained earlier in the hearing.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Okay. Can I clarify the inter-relationship between the Economic Council and the oversight group? Will the paper shortly being produced be published as an independent document for States Members or is it a report from a subgroup to its parent, which will then be encompassed in a wider document?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

No, it is important and it has been agreed that that is an independent paper. It has been put together by a group of very knowledgeable and skilled Islanders in their sectors. While it will be presented up to the political oversight group we will very much ensure that that stays an independent paper.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

The final question in this area then: am I right in saying this paper has a dual function? One will be to report on how things have gone thus far. Are you also saying it has an element of foresight to it and where it is going and how it sees things evolving from now?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

This is a completely forward-looking piece of work. The Economic Council is completely forward-looking.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

To what extent will it report on past activities?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

It does not really do that. As I said, it is a forward-looking paper. It is advice and guidance to help formulate the future economy programmes and build the economic framework.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Okay, so I think I understand. Basically the original idea of the business liaison group and the economic taskforce was to assist very much with the immediate situation. That immediate situation is not therefore being dealt with by the Economic Council effectively now?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

No, so the current situation is dealt with by officers in my department, Treasury and Social Security. The lead officers are myself, the Minister for Treasury and Resources, Senator Gorst, and Deputy Martin and we are the first line of defence against the current situation. We are formulating policy and reviewing all of the current business and fiscal support in that group. Once we have worked with officers and come up with our recommendations we take that to the Council of Ministers for approval and then implement it. That is how it is working. That is how this evolved. If you remember in the early stages we took a bit of time to understand how best to manage this, and so we formed a number of informal groups that met in the early stages to advise on the payroll scheme, but that process now has become more formalised and a lot smoother.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thanks for that. As I say, it is because of the upsurge of those small groups at the beginning, I wanted to try to find out how and where we have arrived at, and you clarified that. That completes my limited area of questioning, so I will hand back to the chair.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I will ask officers to share the terms of reference with the Scrutiny Panel for the Economic Council if that helps.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

That would help. Thank you.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Thank you, and thank you, the Deputy of St. Mary. I hope it was not an overly-limited area of questioning. You are very welcome to put in other questions on any subject related to the Minister. Minister, carrying on from the Deputy of St. Mary's questioning, with regard to the future recovery work, how will the Government address inequalities? We have seen older people affected by the health impacts of this COVID-19 pandemic but we are seeing younger people facing much stronger economic consequences of this pandemic. In the same way we have seen women lose jobs faster than men have been losing jobs. I am sure if we were to look in Jersey, and I do not know if the statistics are there, we may well see that there are nationality differences in the impacts and also possibly income differences, possibly a lot of lower income jobs have been lost rather than higher income jobs. How is the Economic Council, how are the Government, going to deal with those inequalities that have emerged due to COVID?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I am not sure that we have received any official statistics about those inequalities. There might be some unofficial sources that are claiming inequalities, but I am not sure if there are any that we fully understand as yet. What we tried to do with our fiscal support programme and packages is support as many jobs as we can through every business. The support we have provided has been very inclusive. I know that does not deal with perhaps how we might deal with any inequalities that emerge but, as I have said, I believe there is no official data on that as yet.

[11:45]

Deputy K.F. Morel:

In that case, I have to ask, will you be seeking to collect that sort of data? To be honest, the data on male versus female job losses is there. I can also say that pretty much there is data about age as well. You do not even need specific data to know that younger people are being impacted economically because they are the ones who will not have the job prospects. Will you be trying to create policy measures that target these inequalities?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

To be honest, at the moment the answer to that is that we have not considered that. That has not been suggested in any economic advice, but I will certainly now, as you have brought it up, raise the issue and look at how we might help deal with any of those issues as they emerge. We have discussed it informally, internally, and I will hand you over to Dan who can update us a bit more.

Group Director, Economy:

I think it is fair to say that there are some overarching principles that we are working to. One in particular and one that was baked into the purpose of the Economic Council, for example, was that we are looking to achieve an inclusive and diverse economy that allows people, families and businesses to fulfil their potential. For me it is about equality of opportunity but not necessarily equality of outcome. That is certainly what we are aiming at, and that is going to be a fundamental part of the policy development work that we are going to be doing next year. I think it is fair to say that on our assessment of evidence and data, we are in a place where we need to think carefully about how we improve the data going forward and what mechanism we use to capture that. Of course Statistics Jersey do a bit of that and we get a weekly read out of what is happening in the economy but I think we are looking forward in 2021 to take a much more proactive approach to making sure that we have got the information that allows us to deliver policies that are as inclusive as they possibly can be so that the Island can fulfil its potential for particular individuals in the Island as well.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you. As well as picking up some general questions that go across from economic response to economic policies going forward, I would like to bring back my question from several months ago about possible modelling for our internal economy. I am not claiming that we can operate an internal economy, but I would like to ask the Minister: would he consider doing economic modelling to understand what our internal economy can look like to make at least further decisions based on the numbers?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Thank you, Deputy. Dan will deal with that.

Group Director, Economy:

As we discussed previously, one of the tools that we are developing this year within work package one of the economic framework are tools to do exactly that, to look at the economy as a whole, and look at what the impact of various government interventions are, so that we can use that data to feed directly into policy development pieces. This is of course why it was work package one that we developed these models but going forward we are trying to look at the economy as an ecosystem

that is not siloed but is something that is interconnected, and we are trying to address that as a whole.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you. It will be interesting to see the development.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Thank you, Deputy Gardiner. The last question in this response area: are there any aspects of the COVID response that you believe the Government intend to make more enduring? It could be things like remote working, which is perhaps an obvious one. Is there anything that you think will be a long-lasting change?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

That is a really interesting question. I think a lot of businesses who have changed their processes for COVID have said: "This is better. It is making us more efficient, more productive. We are going to keep it." Remote working is one of those areas. I am not sure right now if there is any at this stage. I think it is a bit too early to tell. Our payroll scheme, our version of the furlough scheme, has been incredibly effective. Should we face any future big economic shocks we know that is something that is tried-and-tested and works really well. I am sure the Chief Minister would like to give everybody another £100 at some stage in the future, because again that seemed to create some useful economic stimulus.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

While you are on the £100, Minister, very briefly: do you have any information about, and I hope I am not stealing a question from later, which sectors benefited most from that £100?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

No, not yet. That information is on the way, though. I am not sure when we can expect it but if any officers have got an update they can share it now. The scheme finished at the end of October so I would think we would allow 2 to 3 weeks for them to collate the relevant information. I think it is imminent.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Brilliant, thank you. I am going to move on, Minister, to supply chain. Not only is this the impact of COVID but we have Brexit on the horizon. Are you receiving any feedback from businesses about disruption to supply chains, looking at the winter ahead, not at the past? It could be garages not getting car parts, it could be retail shops not getting food in.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Not currently. There have been one or 2 issues but that would be probably business as usual instances and we are not aware of any disruption in the supply chain or the manufacturing. In fact Brexit, however that pans out, could provide bigger challenges there, but I will hand you over to Dan who has been leading on that.

Group Director, Economy:

We have established a supply chain contingency and security group that meets on a weekly basis and for the first time we have got a consolidated contingency plan and risk assessment. To answer your question specifically, because we have been round the buoy a few times in terms of potential day one no deal, we have been able to polish previous contingency measures to the extent that we are quite comfortable with the current position with the supply chain, not just in terms of things like domestic food supplies and medicines but also in the context of the infrastructure, the situation with Condor, the contingency that they have got in the U.K. Also we are quite well plugged into the U.K. Government in terms of horizon scanning, particularly around imports coming in through the short strait and particularly around things like traffic disruption in or around the ports that serve the Island. I think we feel at this stage that we are on top of this. We have got nothing to worry about. The vast majority of the risks are low to medium and in that context we feel like we are in a good place. We have also stood up a no-future negotiated outcome team that again meets every 2 weeks, which is chaired by Julian Blazeby, the director general for Justice and Home Affairs. Again that is a slightly broader group of officers who are looking at associated issues such as vulnerable people and how the community taskforce might need to be stood up. Indeed, finally the One Government COVID team is again stood up as well and part of that process to reflect back to a previous question is to look at risk assessments across sectors and R.A.G.-rate (red, amber, green) that in terms of if a second wave starts to hit the Island where do we predict the impact on particular sectors that would be felt most acutely. I think it feels from my perspective, having been in this position a few times in the past over recent years, that we are in quite a good place in terms of the contingency planning.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

You mentioned being there quite a few times over the past few years and I appreciate that. Brexit has forced this planning, if you know what I mean, and it works well with COVID too. To get a final word on the issue: is your planning scenario-based and are you satisfied that in the worst-case scenario with COVID and Brexit that particularly retail and pharmaceutical sectors will still be able to supply Islanders?

Group Director, Economy:

Yes. We have got a strong emergency planning element in the team and we are working to what we would describe as the most recent reasonable worst-case scenarios. We are not anticipating

massive disruption to the supply chain but of course it would be ridiculous to expect that there would be no disruption to the supply chain and a lot of it depends on consumer behaviour in the U.K. to a certain extent as well. Based on our reasonable worst-case scenario we are not anticipating the need for Jersey people to stockpile food and we feel that we have got a very robust system in place to ensure medicines and sanitary supplies as well are going to get to the Island in any eventuality and certainly against our reasonable worst-case scenario that is mapped into the U.K.'s risk assessment process as well.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

I am going to move on to issues in agriculture. Minister, the fishing sector, as we know, took a strong hit from COVID. It is potentially going to take another hit from Brexit. Can you explain what you and the department are doing to help Jersey's fishing fleet?

Group Director, Economy:

Perhaps if I could update you, Chair, on that. This coming year we have a review of the Rural Economy Strategy, so we are working and have been working quite closely with our colleagues in the agricultural sector to look at what that looks like going forward, but also in the context of preparations for the end of the transition period, because of course when you look at the key issues they tend to be in agriculture and fisheries, because those are the things that fall out of our relationship with Europe as specific sectors. I think the progress in the agricultural space is more developed. We are on our second incarnation of a 5-year Rural Economy Strategy, so we have had effectively 10 years of good collegiate partnership working with the sector and we are, I think, of like mind around what the future direction of travel needs to look like. Of course we have got specific challenges in agriculture around economies of scale, around what markets are going to do post the end of the transition period, what types of trade arrangements we are going to have, what types of tariffs we are going to be up against and what sort of non-tariff barriers we are going to be up against. It is very similar for fisheries and aquaculture. In the interest of brevity, we are taking a much closer look at the fishing sector from an economic development perspective because historically we have been looking at it from a rather regulatory perspective, and looking at what sort of issues we need to work on with the industry. I think COVID has shown that resilience is an issue for quite a few sectors in the economy but not least fishing, who rely on effectively 2 parts of the year to generate profit that sees them through the rest of the year. It is quite vulnerable in catcher fisheries. Aquaculture has slightly different issues, as Deputy Luce will know, but we are now focusing on a process whereby we are moving to work much more closely with the Jersey Fishermen's Association, with the support of Deputy Luce, to make sure that we understand how we can potentially diversify markets into the local economy and to also diversify markets outside of Europe. We do that in the agricultural space, so working with the fisheries sector to effectively collaborate in a different way, in a more co-operative way, and look at what the other market opportunities are,

what the opportunities for digitising that space are, what the opportunities for adding value are, and what infrastructure requirements might be required to make that more successful and to effectively manage some of the risk that is associated with the current operating model.

[12:00]

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Thank you for that very comprehensive answer. Moving on to agriculture, the panel has received a submission from the Jersey Farmers Union and they are clearly very concerned about the logistics of bringing workers into the Island from other countries due to both Brexit and COVID. Naturally timing is everything in agriculture so they need workers at the point of harvesting and planting. Nature does not wait for them. What assurances are you, Minister, able to give farmers that they will be able to get the staff that they need?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

We are working very closely with the J.F.U. (Jersey Farmers Union) on this and we want to give them as much assurance as we possibly can, but I think we do realise there are still challenges, especially post-Brexit, into how we source labour. Fortunately a lot of the sector do have longstanding relationships with workforces and other countries and I am very much hoping that a lot of that will still hold up. We are working as closely as we can but we must realise that there are significant challenges and they will take a lot of joined-up thinking. Dan is going to come in as well now.

Group Director, Economy:

In a broader contextual piece, agriculture has always suffered from challenges around labour. The one thing I will say about farmers is they are probably one of the most adaptable sectors that I have ever worked with and all credit to them. You may remember not so many moons ago that we had a challenge with Polish labour disappearing as the Polish economy effectively started to grow and it was in the interests of those people that historically migrated to work in Jersey to migrate back to Poland and work for other European countries where they were getting better pay and, of course, exchange rates and all sorts of things were at play there. The point I am trying to make is that historically there have always been labour challenges in the agriculture market but between us we do have a good relationship with the J.F.U. and they do a very good job of accessing labour. Once we understand what the problem is that we need to solve we will go about it in exactly the same way.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

One of the J.F.U.'s concerns is with regard to returning farm workers, particularly with the move to this new 9-month permit. Through their submission they have said that they would like greater clarity on these matters. Is the department able to help them gain that clarity by liaising with the Home Affairs Department if necessary, particularly as they need this clarity during the winter?

Group Director, Economy:

Yes, of course. I think it is a key issue. My agricultural adviser, John Vautier, is very much embedded in those discussions at the moment. I think one of the challenges is that the situation around migrant workers is a bit foggy and I think the important thing is to make sure we continue to work very closely, not just externally but also internally, to make sure that we are properly joined up with our External Relations colleagues and our colleagues in the Customs and Immigration Service to make sure that we fully understand what the implications at the end of the transition period look like.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Brilliant, thank you, Dan. I am going to pass over to Deputy Pamplin now who is going to ask a bit more about the recovery phase of COVID.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Thank you, Chair. We are into this new scenario where we are seeing playing out, given rising rates, obviously putting our nearest neighbours, France, into lockdown and we see now England last week. If cases of COVID were to rise substantially, and we know measures are being discussed as we speak and we know there will be steps in play. I think it is important to reiterate the rumours were quashed the other night, thanks to you, Minister, and the Government very quickly and how important that was to do so because we are not going to go straight to second lockdown. But with the mitigating measures that may come, whatever they were in the next couple of days, what would be the next set of responses and measures that you think will be in play in response?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I do not need to think about them because I think I know what they might be. But I would be reluctant to share that with you now in a public hearing, simply because the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee are meeting as we speak to discuss what the final advice might look like. We did give States Members a flavour of that in the presentation yesterday morning but I cannot share that publicly at this stage because I would not want to create any confusion among Islanders. I think, as you know, Deputy, as an expert in communications yourself, the message when it does come out needs to be clear and concise and contain all of the correct detail, just so that we do not get any new rumours appearing.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Yes, absolutely. Because obviously one of the main lessons, and I am sure there will be for another time, was the leaking of messages when big announcements were happening. We saw that earlier in the days and I would imagine you and others have been looking into that, so we do not find something is leaked before it is publicly announced.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes, absolutely.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Okay, great. Obviously we cannot go into too much detail, as you explained, but is there a process that you can talk about that is going on for those who are not aware how this works, for anybody watching? As you say, we had a briefing yesterday and I guess the simple answer is you are looking at all avenues but is there anything you could explain about the process that is undertaken, who is involved in that process and how it works?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

The process is that our S.T.A.C. and relevant officers are constantly monitoring all aspects of the COVID pandemic. An important asset we have is around our test, track and trace team. Right at the heart of our measures will be ensuring that that remains properly resourced and, as our numbers grow, if they do grow further we want to make sure that if they need additional resource that that is in place. The S.T.A.C., in the first instance, report to a group of Ministers called the competent authority Ministers, who then consider their advice. That group consists of the Chief Minister, the Minister for Health and Social Services, the Minister for Social Security, the Minister for Education, the Minister for Home Affairs and myself, and apologies if I have left any Minister out; I think that is largely it. Quite often we might escalate things to the Council of Ministers, should it be deemed necessary, and we also share information at the appropriate time with States Members ahead of any public announcement; that is simply how the process works. We have had a number of discussions this week to finetune the ultimate measures that will be announced on Monday. Of course, everything stays under review and the economic support has to be linked to the measures we make. For example, if we were going to announce any measures that would impact upon sectors of the economy, I want to make absolutely sure that at the same time we can announce what additional support would be in place to help them, rather than announce the measures and then them having to wait a week or 2. Because they have to take relevant action on behalf of their businesses as soon as we make these announcements. The strategy is to ensure that we protect Islanders' health, especially those who are most vulnerable, while trying to also protect people's jobs and livelihoods and economic well-being. Of course, there are other medical important considerations, for example, those of us who have ongoing conditions that need regular treatments

and so on and so forth, to try and make sure that is not impacted, and that is why it is really important we maintain air links to Southampton, for example. I think that is one of the concerns, when the world finally does an audit on this in the future, it is going to be very interesting to find out, as a result of COVID, the impact on those in ordinary and medical care situations.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Yes. No, definitely. The figures that are coming out of the U.K. in the last few days sees that the growth reported in September was weaker than some economists had anticipated for the U.K. We are obviously in a very different scenario because we kept things ticking over in the summer. We had testing in our borders, so we had some movement. Is there any indication in terms of the Island economy in terms if it has bounced back? It is obviously not at the pre-COVID levels but how do you see the numbers at the moment? Obviously we saw some good news last week with the announcement of the vaccine, which could be coming online very shortly, so there was some buoyancy there. But where do you see the figures at the moment and what are you seeing and hearing?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

The Fiscal Policy Panel, if you look to its latest paper which was issued, I think, on or about 5th August this year, estimated that our economy or our G.V.A. (Growth Value Added) figure would fall by 7.5 per cent, so that was the forecast. We have not had an update from the panel and the economic figures are not compiled. We need to wait to get to the end of the year before we start seeing these figures coming in. But indications are, I think, that the economy has improved slightly better than that, so I am hopeful that when the figures do come up they are going to show a slightly improved position on the F.P.P.'s (Fiscal Policy Panel) forecast. That, of course, all depends upon how we manage the pandemic going through the winter of course.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Yes, absolutely 100 per cent and obviously any other measures because of rising infections and what that could mean. The fiscal stimulus measures have been touched upon during the hearing. We obviously heard about the impact of the £100 card spend. In fact in my hearing yesterday, with the director general of Customer and Local Services, it gave us a bit of background and detail on how it all went. It seemed to go very well. Two questions, I guess: have any other discussions about when and if and how that could be redone again as a Christmas bonus or something you would keep up your sleeve for another time? Secondly, what other fiscal stimuluses that may be introduced, considering what happens in the next few days?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes. Excuse me, hang on, I just need to take a water break, 2 minutes. That is better, thank you, sorry about that. Sorry, I just lost my train of thought, could you just remind me? Yes, the £100 card, absolutely. We made it very clear, we asked Islanders to hang on to the card because it could easily be topped up, if that was necessary. Any preliminary discussions about that would suggest that any further funding through the card would come early in the new year but no decisions have been made. I think that would only be likely if we saw further significant declines in the economy, and that depends on what happens in the days and weeks ahead. I think if there were to be an additional top-up I think we would be looking at perhaps a January/February timetable for that.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Because what I thought would be interesting in looking at it and, as you said, the date is not fully out yet, is there was definitely a surge in spend - that is clear - but we are in that very peculiar place, that lull between October half-term, Halloween bonfire, that sort of stage and then Christmas obviously. Obviously we want to keep the economy going and having these little dips; it is a question of how do you keep that stimulus going? In fact we were only discussing pre-meeting about how Christmas has suddenly come early, it is a discussion we all have every year but any thoughts in supporting the industries or just your general thoughts on that? Because everybody went shopping, there was a mass rush, everybody was just stimulating the economy, so £11 million. Everybody stopped thinking Christmas is coming and we do not know what is going to happen next. I think you get the point where I am going: how do you keep the stimulus going in these little lulls?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes. The positive impact of the physical stimulus provided by the card, which ended in October, will run into November; the financial benefit will help businesses sustain themselves. Christmas is traditionally a time where Islanders spend well in the economy and I would hope and encourage Islanders to spend as well as they possibly can in the run up to Christmas. It is then January and February where we tend to see a lull in spending, and it was deemed that that would be where any stimulus would be best, would be most beneficial. But, of course, we will continue to take economic advice on that.

[12:15]

Another option could be perhaps if a particular sector of the economy was impacted upon by further measures then we could do something directly to help that particular sector. Those are all ideas that are currently under consideration but we have to wait and see how the pandemic pans out. But I very much hope that we can introduce further sensible measures to contain it, rather than start looking at more drastic measures or lockdowns in the future, which I very much believe we will be able to avoid.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Of course, one of the impacts that is starting to come out, hearing on the ground, is the Christmas trade for hotels and restaurants. It is incredibly valuable because obviously Christmas parties, Christmas meals, people booking hotels for Christmas functions and it is certainly something I am hearing and I am sure you are. Regardless of where we are, because obviously the restrictions are what they are right now, everybody is expecting them not to improve in the next few months. They could even tighten because of whatever happens next. Are there already plans in place because that is going to be an obvious hit that, again, the hospitality trade is going to get a double whammy, one of their biggest impacts of the year, and I was just wondering if there are any pre-measures to take because that is surely going to have a massive impact in the local economy?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes. There is no doubt about it that hotels, bars and restaurants will be severely impacted this Christmas because they have lost the traditional Christmas party opportunity due to restrictions on the numbers that can gather. I think the industry are trying to work around the measures on gatherings as best they possibly can, so they have been able to salvage some of that but they are still nothing like where they should be. That is very challenging for them. Hotels perhaps also, as well as accommodation, being impacted; hotels tend to be the main supplier of the bigger parties and bigger functions, so you are right, they have taken a double hit because they cannot do any of those currently. The payroll scheme, which I very much hope will be announced alongside any announcements on Monday, is a phase 3, it is being flexed to be more related to a business's detriment. Where it was fixed at 20 per cent detriment, a 40 per cent contribution in payroll, reducing to 30 per cent and then 20 per cent in the new year is likely to be based on an individual business's detriment, so the more your detriment the more your payroll contribution will be. We are finalising the details of the approvals on that right now.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

That is good because that was going to be my next question on the co-funded scheme and what form it will take and enable these businesses because I would imagine now, as we have seen in the U.K. and further analysis there also, it is going to go well into the spring and, hopefully, by then we will have the vaccine in play. But are there any more details to give us or is it just you are in the final stages now, I guess?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

We are in the final stages of that and I would rather wait until we had all of the detail agreed. We are also in consultation with Jersey Hospitality Association and Chamber of Commerce and we just want to make sure we have a scheme that is absolutely right. But, having said that, things are

moving so quickly we could announce a new scheme next week and 2 weeks later we could have to revisit it again, depending on the situation. But we are prepared to do that, we are well-positioned to do that, to move quickly if we have to.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

My final question is no surprise and related to the charities and the arts world really, both interlinked in some way, shape and form. Theatre has been devastated, live music has been devastated, and that has obviously impacted the external groups that support those events and also functions like conferences and stuff and obviously the charity sectors and the impact to the lottery fund. I know it is difficult because you have lost 2 Assistant Ministers of late but when can we start hearing more about those sectors soon because there are a lot of people on the Island who are very concerned about the arts, the culture impacts because of COVID and the like?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes, certainly. There has been, again, a huge impact in those sectors. A lot of musicians and performers are self-employed and there has been a terrible impact across that sector as well. Of course, our payroll funding has, I hope, provided some very useful support towards them. But the medical advice is on gatherings, unlikely to allow gatherings of the numbers that make theatres and events and make conferences viable, like you say, until the first quarter of next year. The arts and heritage and culture organisations, again, have suffered significant detriment, especially Jersey Heritage, who rely on visitor numbers to boost their income from our valuable heritage assets. But I still think the arts and culture have been terribly important. Jersey Heritage managed to keep a lot of their sites open for Islanders to enjoy, some really helpful respite and well-being during the pandemic, and Dan can give you some more information on that.

Group Director, Economy:

Yes, thank you, Minister. I think it is fair to say that we have been working very closely with Jersey Heritage, with the Jersey Opera House, with the Jersey Arts Centre and indeed with ArtHouse Jersey. In particular with Jersey Heritage Trust, the question is with 50 per cent of their income coming from government funding through a partnership agreement, is how do we help them stay as a going concern, particularly where you have got a situation where even if local people continue to visit these sites, often they are getting in free because they are members? Cash flow for all of these organisations has been incredibly difficult. But we have been working closely and monitoring cashflow and reforecasting cashflow and making sure that these organisations have got the appropriate amount of response to keep them, effectively, alive through the crisis. Some have taken different approaches, so some have continued to try and trade but others, for obvious reasons, trade has been impossible. But in those cases I think we do have an opportunity to look at stimulus funding going forward to do the kind of obvious and necessary repairs in these buildings, so that

when they are able to open they are able to open in an enhanced setting. Whereas a lot of the work that it would have been impossible to do if you were running as an open business, effectively, an opportunity to put right and offered kind of CapEx work that is required and where, ultimately, these buildings have not been maintained for many years. I think there is an opportunity there but we have worked very closely with organisations and we have tried our best to support our cash flow and reforecast as appropriate.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Can I just add on to that? I know there are a small number of very, I think, good applications to the fiscal stimulus programme that will allow some of our heritage assets to be significantly improved, that some of it being perhaps really underutilised presently.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

No, it is a good plan. I think when we go to our next hearing we can start exploring beyond COVID, relooking at the structures of how arts and cultures are funded and how that all works but I think it is a bit premature at this stage. My last question is: how are the lottery sales going and has that had any impact because of the pandemic? I know it is going and the prices have changed since last year but I just wondered, as we had you for the last question from me, have you got any details? Is it being well-received? Are you seeing year-on-year movement? Are people still buying?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I have not had a ticket-sales update recently. The price has reduced from £3 to £2 and if my own personal experience of buying lottery tickets is anything to go by, I would hope the figures will be up this year but it is too early to tell. But just on the subject of lottery, you will know because we worked together on it, it is a proposition that is pending for the States which distributes the lottery money between the Association of Jersey Charities and the Jersey Community Fund. If the States accept that, that means lottery profits will be distributed much more broadly across the whole community.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Yes, we are looking forward to that for sure. Okay, that is it from me, you will be pleased to hear. I think I have run out of questions, well that is never true but I ...

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I do not believe it.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

I am going to quickly pass over to the Deputy of St. Martin, who I know has another question, then if there is time I have got one or 2 myself.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Minister, just a couple of very quick questions about resource, if I may. The first one is about political resource, the economy is in the middle of a COVID crisis, so you have got a lot of challenge. You are short of 2 Assistant Ministers, how quickly are you going to make a decision and when are we going to know who you are appointing, please?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

I would hope next week. The Chief Minister and I have had discussions about this but since the sitting on Tuesday we had a lot of work to catch up on, the pandemic and new measures related and Brexit-related. We are giving consideration to that right now and I expect an announcement to be made early next week.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Okay, thank you. The second part of the resource question was about civil service resource and you will be aware, Minister, that there has been a lot of criticism of the increase in numbers in the civil service and at times when we are trying to reduce our expenditure. I see your chief officer on Twitter in the last 24 hours has got jobs out for sector leads in 3 different parts of your department. Can you tell us what that is all about, please?

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes, I am going to pass to Dan but I would think if you look back to the Economic Development Department in the first round of spending reductions between 2014 and 2018, my department reduced expenditure, I believe, by almost up to 20 per cent. During that period the chief executive officer left and a number of other officers left. By the time we got to the end of that term we were left with a very small core team of people. Part of the new target operating model in the new government structure is addressing some of those vacancies that we have been operating without for quite a long period of time. Now I can hand you over to Dan, just to put a bit more detail around that.

Group Director, Economy:

Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Deputy. Yes, you are quite right, so we have been through a process of trying to understand what we think the future needs of an Economy Department might look like. I think, certainly from our perspective, a greater focus on sector specific support seems to be the way we are going to most effectively box out of COVID. I think the proposed structure has got, effectively, 4 sector leads in it; one is an enhanced aquaculture and fisheries function, I think recognising particular challenges in the fishery sector where historically we have, in a sense, not focused on the economic development piece within fisheries but have focused on the regulatory

piece, the relationship through the Bay of Granville Treaty and various bits of R. and D. (Research and Development) through the Marine Resources team that is based at Howard Davis Farm. But I think it is time to perhaps get our teeth into a bigger piece of economic development work in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. I think having some specific government competency of focus in that area will be good for the future. We have got, I think, a priority to try and look more closely at what benefits culture, arts and heritage can bring to the Island. Currently we do not have a dedicated culture officer but we are looking to work out what culture, arts and heritage can do in terms of the vibrancy of St. Helier, in terms of well-being for Islanders and indeed what economic development can fall out of looking at culture, arts and heritage in a slightly broader sense. We are looking at a growth and trade function, which encompasses in with investments. But also looking forward, working with industry in a slightly more collegiate way around some of the challenges around trade going forward in a space where we are going to be doing a lot of work in terms of free-trade agreements and the implications of that, how we are going to deal with non-tariff barriers, what sorts of Government intervention we could consider. Finally, focusing on those areas of the economy that are suffering significant detriment in hospitality and retail. I think it is very encouraging, from my perspective, where we have been trying to do economic development with a bit of a skeleton crew.

[12:30]

Even in the new structure we are still below numbers that were in the department when I took over as an interim head of service in 2018. I think form follows function. I think it is fit for purpose and we have been through quite significant staff consultation to get us to the right place. If I am honest, I am quite pleased about it and optimistic about the future in the context of capacity and capability within the team.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I am sure we will come back to that again.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Yes, thank you. I am going to squeeze in one last question, even though it is 12.30 p.m. and also because I do not like seeing officers brought to meetings who are not then asked questions. Minister, just quickly moving to sport but in relation to COVID, I was just wondering, we know that various sports clubs and associations have been affected by COVID quite strongly so I was wondering how the department, through Jersey Sport, is helping those clubs and associations get back on their feet and play the important role in the community that they play.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Yes. Can I introduce Barclay to the meeting?

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Of course.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Welcome, Barclay. I thought you were going to get off lightly there for a minute.

Operations Manager, Sports Division, Growth, Housing and Environment:

Thank you, panel. Sorry, introductions, Barclay Harvey, Head of Sport, so I look after the government's sports facilities. Yes, I have been waiting a while but I am here. A lot of communication has been going out around the guidance and how clubs and associations can interpret the guidance and be responsible. I think sport has been very lucky to get moving again, no pun intended. Some of the sports where there is considerable contact, so mixed martial arts, boxing, et cetera, which are indoor high-intensity, clearly with the current restrictions cannot participate. A small number have been disenfranchised but the majority have been very responsible and are able to do a vast majority of what they wanted to do. I know Jersey Sport have been supporting some of those sports using some grant money, and that has been much appreciated. I think they have had quite a few applications for that. But we have communicated a lot and we have been staying close to the majority of sports to try and keep them moving.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Thank you, that is very helpful. Barclay, while you are there, not to ask another question but obviously particularly with regard to the Government Plan we do have questions about sports facilities. It may be worth us organising a private meeting just to discuss that. We were hoping to get those sorts of questions in today but, sadly, time is not our friend.

Operations Manager, Sports Division, Growth, Housing and Environment:

More than happy to do so.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Thank you. Minister, that is 2 hours; your 2 hours is up, Minister.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Already?

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Yes, it is, exactly. Thank you very much for joining us and for answering those questions as candidly as you possibly can. We really appreciate it. Thank you and thank you to your officers as well. We

will bring this hearing to an end and the panel will now move to a slightly separate meeting to finish off our regular meeting. Thank you.

The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture:

Thank you, Chair, on behalf of all of my team.

[12:33]