

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY CONNÉTABLE OF ST. BRELADE
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 24th JANUARY 2022
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 31st JANUARY 2022**

Question

“Will the Chief Minister advise what consideration, if any, was given to the legal ramifications of –

- (a) the creation of Strategic Policy, Performance and Planning (S.P.P.P.) as a Government department that not only leads policy but measures its performance;
- (b) the transfer of Statistics Jersey from the Chief Minister’s Department to Strategic Policy, Performance and Planning; and
- (c) the combination of the statutory role of the Chief Statistician with S.P.P.P.’s Director of Analytics;

and will he further advise what monitoring is undertaken, and what independent, expert review is sought, to ensure that any prospective conflicts arising from these arrangements are addressed and that these arrangements remain lawful and within the spirit of the Statistics and Census (Jersey) Law 2018; and are consistent with the production of impartial data and the independent political power of the Chief Statistician in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Statistics and related statistical standards produced by the United Nations?”

Answer

There is a dedicated legal framework for statistical production, in the form of Statistics and Census (Jersey) Law 2018. Due regard was given to this and other relevant legislation as part of the establishment of the Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance Department, which was formed as part of the 2018 re-structuring that included the dissolution of the Chief Minister’s Department, and the development of Statistics Jersey, including the statutory role of the Chief Statistician. This included maintaining the right of Statistics Jersey to act independently when exercising its functions, and its overarching aim of contributing to public policy development and the delivery of public services, as well as the need to improve statistical standards across government; and to enhancing evidence-based policy development and performance reporting standards.

Nevertheless, while the current arrangements are considered fully consistent with the relevant legislation, and statistical independence has been maintained throughout, a Statistics Legislation Steering Group has been established review arrangements, taking account of United Nations guidance and international best practice. This group, established in February 2021 is chaired by Deputy Kirsten Morel with members including¹ Senator Tracey Vallois and the Chair of the Statistics Users Group. The Vision of the Steering Group has been published and was consulted on between 25 October and 6 December 2021. The next stage will be to summarise the results of the consultation, and to bring forward proposals that will further improve Jersey’s statistical system, including any necessary changes to the arrangements relating to Statistics Jersey. This includes considering the expert professional views of the Chief Statistician and of the Statistics User Group, which is independent of government and has the primary function under the

¹ Additionally, the Chief Statistician, Deputy Chief Statistician, Senior Legal Adviser and relevant Assistant Legal Adviser and Senior Policy Officer are also members.

Law of overseeing the quality, relevance and integrity of statistics compiled by or on behalf of a public authority.