

STATES OF JERSEY

YOUTH ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL REPORT

TUESDAY, 30th MARCH 2021

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[13:30]

The Roll was called and Miss D. Casegas led the Assembly in Prayer.

COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDENT

The Bailiff:

1.1 Welcome to Members of the Youth Assembly

Assemblée est constituée. I am very pleased to welcome all of you as Members of the Youth Assembly to this sitting today. It is a real pleasure for me to be part of this Assembly because it is a very important thing that we are doing and I hope that you are going to have an absolutely excellent afternoon. I would love to have stayed for the whole event but I am in the middle, I am afraid, of judging a court case up here at the R.J.A. and H.S. (Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticultural Society), and I have to go and do that in just a few minutes. I can therefore only stay, I think, for the first question or 2. But you are fortunate because the Deputy of Grouville, Deputy Carolyn Labey, who is the Chair of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association which sponsors this event, will take over from me and will take over the Chair for the rest of the session so you will be in very good hands indeed. I am sorry that I cannot be here for the whole event and I am sure, judging by the questions and the debate topics listed on the Order Paper, it promises to be a very interesting afternoon. I hope you enjoy the experience and that it inspires you to take an active part in our Island's democracy. Maybe you may even think about pursuing a career in politics or, at the very least, consider it important to vote whenever you are able to do so. I hope you have an absolutely wonderful afternoon, I am sure you will but I am certain that Ministers are very eager to answer your questions so we will make a start on the questioning.

QUESTIONS

2. Oral Questions

The Bailiff:

The first item on the Order Paper is question time and I call upon Jem Gurner who will ask a question of Deputy Scott Wickenden, the Assistant Minister for Children and Education.

2.1 Mr. J. Gurner of Victoria College of the Assistant Minister for Children and Education regarding the inclusion of diversity within the primary curriculum.

Is diversity part of the primary curriculum?

Deputy S. M. Wickenden of St. Helier (Assistant Minister for Children and Education):

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. The simple answer is yes. Diversity forms part of the relationships strand of the P.S.H.E. (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) curriculum and students from Key Stages 1 and 2 are taught to respect diversity and equality in relationships. At a deeper level, there is work to do within the advice or non-statutory elements of the primary and secondary curriculum to ensure traditional biases that may have previously been overrepresented by white, western authors, scientists, artists or thinkers are balanced more fairly with those from different backgrounds and starting points.

The Bailiff:

Does anyone wish to ask a supplementary question of the Assistant Minister? If you would indicate whether or not you wish to ask a supplementary question in the chat and I will call upon you. If nobody wishes to ask ... you will have the right to a further supplementary, Mr. Gurner, in just a few moments, I just want to give anyone else the opportunity of asking a question first. Very well, if no one else wishes to ask a supplementary question, Mr. Gurner, you have the right to the last supplementary question.

[14:00]

2.1.1 Mr. J. Gurner:

How do you overcome the barrier certain religious beliefs pose when promoting non-traditional relationships in education?

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

Thank you for that question. I think that certainly the P.S.H.E curriculum we need to be aware of all different kind of religious groups and backgrounds and it should be an important part of the curriculum for diversity at all levels. But it is about just making sure that we are teaching about different religions and what is important to those religions within the curriculum. I think that is the only way we can do it.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much, Assistant Minister. We have next a question from Matilda Garrood of Jersey College for Girls who will ask a question of the Minister for Infrastructure .

2.2 Ms. M. Garrood of Jersey College for Girls of the Minister for External Relations regarding parking charges.

How many elected members and senior civil servants are provided with free car parking?

Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour (The Minister for Infrastructure):

Forty-five elected Members when on official duties are provided with a permit by the Department for I.H.E. (Infrastructure, Housing and Environment) for free parking in public car parks administered by I.H.E. Government employees are not provided with a permit for free parking in public car parks by I.H.E. However, parking exists at many Government of Jersey sites across the Island for the benefit of employees and visitors to use without charge. I.H.E. does not hold information on which employees can make use of this parking.

The Bailiff:

Are there any supplementary questions to ask of the Minister. Yes, Mr. Langhorn.

2.2.1 Ms. M. Garrood:

At the height of the pandemic in Jersey the States found the funding and spaces to give the frontline health care workers free parking. States Members have and continue to have this benefit even though they are not frontline workers. Can you explain how it is fair that healthcare workers have now had that benefit revoked while the States Members still park for free?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Well, indeed they were granted free parking, in fact the whole of Patriotic Street car park, which is a large multi-storey car park, was handed over to the health unit, so the general hospital, which was greatly received. In fact all the car parks were free to the general public but that particular car park was reserved for the health authorities. Likewise Layby 7, which was opposite the Nightingale Hospital, which I am grateful to say we did not have to use. It is a double-edged sword with regard to parking generally because car parks were free in town in multi-storey car parks but it means that there was not the turnover there for the public so that people who live in town would actually go and park their vehicles there so people could not come to town to do their shopping. So we need the turnover of people to keep town a very vibrant place. As I say States Members only use the car parking when they are on States business. Thank you.

The Bailiff:

I called on Stuart Langhorn but that did not sound like Stuart Langhorn. It is difficult for me to understand who is wanting to ask a question so I will ask it again, would any other participant wish to ask a supplementary question of the Minister?

Ms. M. Garrood:

Yes, can I ask another?

The Bailiff:

Yes, who is that?

2.2.2 Ms. M. Garrood:

While States Members are on Government business they are allowed to park wherever they want, why can nurses not do the same? The pandemic is still continuing but their parking has now been revoked, so - I do not know - are States Member worth more than our nurses?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Absolutely not. But, as I say, States Member are very much restricted to certain car parks. They cannot park wherever they like and it is only on States business, which is quite rare. Forty-five States Members do have permits but not everybody uses them. Quite a few actually cycle, many catch the bus and some, like myself being a St. Saviour Deputy, walk into the States Chamber. It is quite a varied amount of people using it.

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Minister. Can I just ask who asked that last question because it is not quite clear to me on the chat who is asking the questions? Who was it who asked the last question? That was both from Matilda Garrood. So does any other participant wish to ask a question of the Minister about this matter? Ellie Daniel.

2.2.3 Ms. E. Daniel of Jersey College for Girls:

The parking permits are worth £147 a month, so how do you know when they are parking and where?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Well, we do not basically but most States Members use the car park up at Pier Road, which does have an awful lot of spare space. Many people who come to town tend not to like Pier Road too much because it is a bit of a walk up the hill, plus it is a little bit exposed weather-wise. There is always plenty of spare parking up at Pier Road. But, as I say, we take States Members at their word. They do not have to come into town very often, more so now we are working remotely.

The Bailiff:

A follow up question, Ms. Daniel? No. Does any other person wish to ask of the Minister on this matter? You get a final supplementary, Ms. Garrood, if you wish.

2.2.4 Ms. M. Garrood:

The mention of spare space there I think is quite significant because if that spare space is not being used all the time, why can it not be used for our nurses and frontline healthcare workers while the pandemic is continued?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

To a great extent they are because we are offering free parking on the tenth floor of Pier Road car park to anyone, including the medical staff who are coming to have their vaccinations at Fort Regent. So there is free parking for 2 hours at the top there, plus the medical staff can park there without

charge. As I say, it is a turnover that we need basically. It is not a question of value, we value all our medical staff, but it is a limited use by States Members.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much, Minister. The next question is from Archie Willetts of Victoria College for Deputy Richard Renouf of St. Ouen, the Minister for Health and Social Services.

2.3 Mr. A. Willetts of Victoria College of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding vaccine passports for travellers to the Island.

Will the Government implement the requirement of a vaccine passport for travellers to the Island?

Deputy R.J. Renouf of St. Ouen (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

Yes, and I thank Mr. Willetts for his question. The Government is currently considering all options in relation to the implementation of vaccine passports. There are motivating factors across all sectors for their implementation. The Government is keen to re-open the economy, while individuals are hopeful for a return to “normal life”. Public health experts continue to focus on reducing transmission of coronavirus and protecting the health and well-being of Islanders. Jersey is ahead of many countries in the world with its vaccination programme. Further division between those vaccinated and unvaccinated has the potential to raise political and ethical questions. The success of the vaccination programme requires high population coverage. Linking vaccination to travel may provide an incentive for those who may otherwise be vaccine-hesitant. However, there are those who may be unable to receive the vaccine and receiving the vaccine is not mandatory. Imposing restrictions to travel based on vaccine status implicitly mandates vaccination, makes it a political issue and may have a negative impact on vaccine uptake. This could have a negative effect on the Island and undermine the success of the COVID-19 vaccination programme. Vaccine passports require a fine balance between the public health and economic impact of the pandemic. It requires consideration of individual liberties while aiming to achieve protection of the whole population from COVID-19. The Government continues to work on this emerging complex topic.

2.3.1 Mr. A. Willetts:

Do you know by what point in time you will have made this decision on the vaccine passports?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

We do not know precise dates as yet but so much depends on what is happening internationally also. There is no point in Jersey creating something if it is not going to be recognised in the U.K. (United Kingdom) or other Crown dependencies or through Europe. So there are bodies across the world that are working on this, including the World Health Organisation and the U.K. Government is working on what may be possible also, and we are in contact with the U.K. Government to ensure that whatever might be introduced is something that is recognised at least throughout what is called the Common Travel Area - the United Kingdom, Crown dependencies and the Republic of Ireland.

2.3.2 Mr. D. Kayley of Victoria College:

If vaccine passports were made mandatory would they be for all travelling to Jersey or only for foreign nationals travelling to Jersey who do not reside here?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Yes, that is very topical because would it be lawful or ethical to draw distinctions? The desire is to have an assurance of people arriving in the Island that they have a COVID status which means that it is safe to bring them on to the Island. Of course many people arriving are local people, they will have gone off Island for their holiday or to visit relatives in the U.K. and they will come back to the Island. I think it would be unfair if local people had a free pass, as it were, and citizens from the

U.K, or other countries, had to jump through hoops to get into Jersey. COVID is no respecter of nationalities, the risk is the same for everybody so I think the same rules should apply to all arrivals.

The Bailiff:

A supplementary question, Mr. Kayley?

2.3.3 Mr. D. Kayley:

Yes, I do. You mention that it would be unfair to distinguish between locals and foreign nationals but does our housing policy, for instance, not already made that distinction?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

It does. That is an area completely separate from travel. Of course, everyone is permitted to enter Jersey, it is a question of who is entitled to work in Jersey and who is entitled to access accommodation in Jersey. Because of our limitations in our area, it has previously been ruled in court hearings that it is lawful for Jersey to impose restrictions on who may acquire residential or housing rights and rights to work in the Island.

The Bailiff:

Does any other participant wish to ask a supplementary question before I give the matter back to Mr. Willetts? Mr. Jervis.

[14:15]

2.3.4 Mr. N. Jervis of Hautlieu:

Good afternoon. According to BBC, there is no evidence that any of the COVID-19 vaccines can completely stop people from transmitting the virus, does this not raise consequences that if people enter Jersey while still carrying the virus, are we not putting people at risk?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Yes, indeed that is a very good point that Mr. Jervis makes. It is not clear, and organisations such as the World Health Organisation are still working on this, how far the vaccination prevents us who are vaccinated transmitting the virus. There is some evidence that we would not transmit it as much, we would not be carrying as much virus, but it does not seem to be the case that we would cease to be carriers. So we might ask what is the point of a vaccination passport? What is being thought of at the moment is a kind of certificate that would give our COVID status, it would say whether we had been vaccinated or not, when we were vaccinated but also when our last test was and whether the test was negative. All the sort of information that might be useful to have at that port of entry. But the mere fact that we have been vaccinated should not necessarily mean that we can do away with isolation. Mr. Jervis is quite right that is still possible, it would seem, to carry the virus even though we have been vaccinated.

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Minister. I now, I am afraid, have to step away to go and deal with that trial that I was mentioning to everyone. The Deputy of Grouville will take over and Mr. Jervis has the right to a supplementary question if he wishes to ask one and after I have listed Ellie Daniels to ask a question, but, as I say, you will now be in very able hands of the Deputy of Grouville. Thank you all very much indeed and enjoy the rest of your day.

Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Sir. Mr. Jervis, did you have a supplementary question you would like to ask? No? I see Ellie Daniel, you have a question you like to ask the Minister.

2.3.5 Miss E. Daniel:

The Minister mentioned in his response that the vaccine passports require a fine balance between public health and the economic impact, so why are they choosing to open the borders, which is going to put public health at risk, before fully opening all local businesses in Jersey which will help the economy?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Jersey is a very connected Island with all sorts of commercial links, principally with the U.K., and we also family links, a lot of people in the Island who have family in the U.K. and there has traditionally been a sense of movement between Jersey and the U.K. It is felt that we cannot close ourselves off from all those links for the good of our own well-being as Islanders but also the economic situation which we do have to account of, we cannot run down our economy which provides us with so many good things in terms of the income that comes in that allows us to afford schooling, health services, *et cetera*. So we have to weigh up against that the risks of being an open Island but also put in place measures to protect the Island. So it is the case that no one can simply travel to the Island and wander about, you have to take 3 tests and at the moment you have to isolate for 10 days minimum before you can move around the Island. From 25th April we will be a little more nuanced and it will depend upon where you have travelled from. If you come from a risky red area you will still have that 10 day isolation, if you have come from a green area, which is assessed at some place that has low rates of COVID we will ask you to isolate until you have received your first negative test results. That worked reasonably well last summer and we are proposing to introduce that once again. I hope that helps answer the question.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Does anyone else have any supplementary questions for the Minister for Health and Social Services?
Anna Edonbos.

2.3.6 Miss A. Edonbos of Jersey College for Girls:

What is the rationale behind letting boarding school students come back without having to isolate for the full period?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Again, a good question. This is very carefully considered. Boarding schools are very closed communities one could say. The occupants are tightly controlled and watched, they are not in the communities around them but they form their smaller separate community. If they can show that there has been no cases of COVID within the school and they have been regularly tested, and that they have moved straight from the school to their departure port to get to Jersey, then we have judged that sufficiently safe to allow those boarding school students come into the Island on a different isolation regime. This is not just a random choice, it has been carefully considered by the medical experts and assessed as safe.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Are there any further supplementary questions for the Minister? If not, I will ask Mr. Willetts who asked the original question if he has a final question?

Mr. A. Willetts:

I would like to thank the Minister for his response. I have no more questions.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

We now turn to a question from Jennifer Rodrigues of Hautlieu of the Assistant Minister for Children and Education.

2.4. Miss J. Rodrigues of Hautlieu of the Assistant Minister for Children and Education regarding the P.H.S.E. curriculum

Is a review of the P.S.H.E. (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) curriculum in the pipeline?

Deputy S. M. Wickenden (Assistant Minister for Children and Education):

There are currently no plans to review the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (P.S.H.E.) curriculum at present. A mapping exercise to compare the developing P.S.H.E. curriculum in England was carried out with the Jersey Curriculum Council in March 2019. The draft guidance available as part of the U.K. developments was examined closely to ensure that our Jersey curriculum was still fit for purpose. At this meeting it was also agreed to carry out a review of P.S.H.E. in the secondary schools. This review was completed at the end of 2019 and as schools are currently working on the recommendations, it would not be appropriate to establish an additional review at this time.

2.4.1 Miss J. Rodrigues:

With recent statistics such as the 97 per cent of women are sexually harassed being released, what do you plan on doing to educate young people within the P.S.H.E. curriculum to address violence against women, such as the murder of Sarah Everard and Boys will be Boys ...

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

I do not know if the Assistant Minister got that, I was struggling.

Deputy S. M. Wickenden:

I think I got the gist of the question, thank you. The P.S.H.E. curriculum is a framework in many ways for how it is taught in schools. Schools will actually vary what they are teaching for the P.S.H.E. depending on the context of the school or what is going on in the media or what is going on in the world right now. There is no strict stopping of dealing with issues like violence against women, if that is something that needs to be increased within the curriculum and it would be up to the schools to choose if they wanted to increase in certain areas. Likewise, students should always ask teachers if they could elaborate on certain areas if there is something that they are worried about in the curriculum that needs to be increased on.

2.4.2 Miss O. Kawala of Jersey College for Girls:

How many female head teachers are in the state sector and are they underrepresented?

Deputy S. M. Wickenden:

Thank you for the question, Olivia. I do not know that information off the top of my head here and I do not have it readily available, but what I can do is make sure I do get information. If there are less women in the schools teaching than there are males then they would be underrepresented and that would need to be looked at definitely. I would be interested to hear the answer to that question myself and I would look at any underrepresentation to see what I could do about it. I will get the answer and it will be distributed to everyone.

2.4.3 Miss N. Balderson of Jersey College for Girls:

With the significance of the sexual harassment issues arising within schools, do you not think anything should be introduced into the education system, especially P.S.H.E., about this issue as it is a critical line of opportunity?

Deputy S. M. Wickenden:

I have to say P.S.H.E. was brought in as a statutory curriculum in 2014, which is a long time after I left school. The P.S.H.E. does have lots of areas that talk about health and well-being, relationships, living in the wider community and when it comes into relationships it is talking about how to

recognise risky or negative relationships or how to respect equality and diversity in relationships. There is a strong level of teaching an awareness of respect for different genders and that is the curriculum. Is it strong enough? I would have to say personally I do not know due to the fact that I have not been the schools, this is a very new position for me, but I do know that it is in the curriculum.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Are there any further questions? In that case I will ask Miss Rodriques if she would like to ask a final questions? No. We will move to the next question from Kenan Bryan of De La Salle for Deputy Trevor Pointon of St. John, Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services.

2.5 Mr. K. Bryan of De La Salle of the Chairman of the Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services regarding mental health support for young people

What specific facilities and support programmes are provided for young people who experience mental health issues?

[14:30]

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John (Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services):

There is a broad spectrum of facilities and support programmes available to young people who experience problems with their mental health. These range from specialist services such as C.A.M.H.S. (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) to many more universal services provided by Government, charities and other third sector organisations. We have the Youth Enquiry Service, better known as Y.E.S., the L.G.B.T.Q. (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning) Youth Project, My Time for young carers, and introduced last year was Kooth, an online counselling and support service for young people that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We also have services in schools provided by school counsellors and the Psychology and Wellbeing Service. Mind Jersey, Brook, Jersey Hospice, the N.S.P.C.C. (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) and Dewberry House all provide a range of services for children and young people, such as mental health support, bereavement support, sexual health advice and much more. The Government of Jersey have recently launched the “Together, we’re here for you” campaign to help Islanders recognise the signs of poor mental health and where to go for support. Every household will - if they have not already - shortly receive information about mental health services. I have to say that my copy arrived yesterday.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Mr. Bryan, do you have a supplementary question at this time?

2.5.1 Mr. K. Bryan:

I do. Does the Minister believe that this is sufficient?

The Deputy of St. John:

I wonder if you could clarify that question, “is it sufficient?”

Mr. K. Bryan:

Do you believe that the Government programmes that you have in place to support young people are of sufficient nature to give them the correct help when they most need it?

The Deputy of St. John:

The evidence during 2020 and the COVID pandemic is that, no, we do not have sufficient to offer the support needed to the many children and adolescents that have presented themselves to the service. We have a massive increase - and I do not use the words lightly - in the number of young people and children who are feeling anxious and emotionally upset and who present themselves to various services, to Mind, to contact Kooth, and there have been over 300 contacts there. There are

other charitable organisations who are there to look after children, the most recent to come into the support programme is Silkworth for adolescents. There is an awful lot out there, but no, it is not sufficient because of the numbers of people that have suddenly become distressed within our society.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. I see Naomi Balderson, you have a question for the Assistant Minister.

2.5.2 Miss N. Balderson:

C.A.M.H.S. is inundated with patients, while being understaffed and underfunded. How are you specifically improving this?

The Deputy of St. John:

As a matter of interest, and I do not have to think very hard about this, we have recently discussed putting a proposition to the Council of Ministers to increase the budget for this year, an already increased budget for 2022, but because of the experience of 2020 and the large numbers of referrals and the fact that people are going to fall off the edge if we do not do something, we put in a bid for nearly £1 million to fund 5 additional clinical staff to begin to meet that need. That is our main efforts at this point.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. Do you have a supplementary, Miss Balderson? We seem to be getting quite a bit of feedback. I will put the next question to Olivia Kawala.

2.5.3 Miss O. Kawala:

On an article written at the beginning of this month, it was mentioned that the Government of Jersey are investing in a wider range of services with the draft strategy open for consultation this month. It is now 2 days until April, so what are you planning to do to support young people's mental health? Kooth is not available all the time for online counselling and the number of hospital admissions are increasing.

The Deputy of St. John:

Thank you for the question. Yes, it is a cause of great concern that the numbers of people who are utilising Robin Ward have increased significantly. The majority, if you look at percentages of people now utilising Robin Ward, seem to be children with mental health issues. The other thing we are doing is that we have recently taken a contract with Mind Jersey to establish a drop-in centre for young people and to support those young people. Of course there is support for young families at places like the Bridge for people to address early issues. The service with C.A.M.H.S. is significantly under pressure and we are endeavouring, as I said in my last answer, to increase the numbers of practitioners who offer a service to young people and children. I hope that answers your question.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Assistant Minister. Does anybody else have any supplementaries for the Assistant Minister? I see Kenan Bryan. You have the last supplementary.

2.5.4 Mr. K. Bryan:

Does the Minister believe that it is appropriate to place under-16s with mental health issues into Robin Ward to get treated, and then 16-plus into St. Saviour's Hospital to mix with ill adults?

The Deputy of St. John:

Thank you for the question, Kenan. I would like to be very honest about this. In relation to both questions about the under-16s and the over-16s, both provisions are not adequate, they are not necessarily appropriate, but in the face of not having inpatient facilities for children with mental

health issues and with numbers previously being so low, the capital expenditure to do that would have been perhaps prohibitive. In relation to over-16s, when we came out of 2020, there were 3 persons residing in Orchard House: entirely inappropriate. Again, we need facilities, and the numbers have increased. We were in a situation before 2020 that if one individual needed accommodation and supervision, if we had provided specific accommodation, that individual would have had to be on their own because the facility would be so underused. There was actually one person at Meadowview in the middle of last year, which I thought was a difficult situation, but given that numbers are rising, if they rise to a point at which the Government needs to address the physical provision to accommodate children and young people with mental health, then we will not shy away from putting in a bid for the funds to do that. I trust that answers your question.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Assistant Minister. I did see that there was a question from Beaulieu, who are in the Chamber. I was following the feed online, so I apologise. I would like to put the question to Katie Le Saint, because she would like to ask something.

2.5.5 Miss K. Le Saint of Beaulieu:

When was the last time these services were reviewed and when will they next be reviewed?

The Deputy of St. John:

I am sorry, I did not catch the beginning of that question and we got awful feedback toward the end.

Miss K. Le Saint:

When was the last time these services were reviewed and when will they next be reviewed?

The Deputy of St. John:

Thank you for the question. The services are currently under review and a project is underway to better design the services. We have not been sitting on our hands, I can assure you. The officer team have been working really hard to produce this case for additional staff and that has involved looking at the whole service to see just what we are providing is appropriate to the various needs that are being presented. I trust that deals with your question.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Assistant Minister. Mr. Bryan, do you have the final question? I am not getting anything, so I think we will move on to the next question, which is Bridget Le Brocq of Beaulieu, who will ask a question of Connétable Len Norman of St. Clement, who is the Minister for Home Affairs.

2.6 Miss B. Le Brocq of Beaulieu of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the safety of Jersey's streets.

Does the Minister consider that Jersey's streets are safe?

Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement (The Minister for Home Affairs):

Yes, I do consider that Jersey's streets are safe. Our law enforcement agencies do an excellent job of ensuring that Jersey is a safe place to live, work and visit, where people are safe and feel safe. Of course incidents do occur and although they are thankfully rare, Islanders can be reassured that the States of Jersey Police are well equipped and stand ready to investigate offences and provide appropriate support for victims of crime. 2020 saw the second-lowest recorded crime figures since the States of Jersey Police began keeping electronic records, from 2,913 recorded crimes. Recorded crime in 2020 was 10 per cent down on the 2017-19 average and domestic crime was 2 per cent down on the same period. Sexual offences were 34 per cent down on the 2017-19 average and all offences associated with the night-time economy were 27 per cent down on those recorded in 2019. Of course a significant proportion of these reductions in crime are linked to COVID and the closures of the

night-time economy. That said, it clearly demonstrates exactly how safe Jersey's streets are at the present time. The challenge now for the States of Jersey Police and its partners is to do all it can to maintain these low levels.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Sorry, I think that was muted in the Assembly before, so I am going to ask Miss Le Brocq if she has a supplementary.

2.6.1 Miss B. Le Brocq:

I do. In response, you can be quoted to say domestic crime was 2 per cent down. Do you believe this is good enough? How will you be implementing changes to ensure this number is once again lowered and be a substantial amount?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

Any one crime, in my view, is one crime too many. Domestic abuse, whether that be crimes of violence or whether that be coercive and controlling behaviour, is one crime too many. What I will be bringing to Assembly later this year is a dedicated domestic abuse law, which will show how significant we consider domestic abuse compared to simple - well, relatively simple - crimes of violence. In that we will include a domestic abuse register, therefore all perpetrators of such crimes would be, if the court decided, placed on that register and could be notified to any future partner about the risks that the future partner might be at risk of. This will be similar to the Sex Offenders Register. There is a lot of work going on in this area. Yes, you are quite right, one crime of domestic abuse, one crime of abuse, is simply one crime too many.

[14:45]

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you very much. I have got Naomi Balderson, who would like to ask a question.

2.6.2 Miss N. Balderson:

There is violence and harassment towards women in Jersey. However, due to the lack of recorded crime and low success rate at trial, the data the Minister states does not support the actual rate of crime. What are you doing to prevent a misogynistic culture in Jersey's streets?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

Naomi is quite right that sexual assaults and so on are probably well underreported and we need to encourage ladies in particular - but of course it can happen to men as well - that they do report inappropriate sexual advances, harassment and assault because I think what the police have proved over the last few years is that they do take these complaints seriously, they listen very carefully and they investigate these complaints very thoroughly. My advice to people who are subject to inappropriate behaviour of this type is to ensure that they do report it and I will give them the assurance that they will be taken seriously.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Do you have a supplementary, Miss Balderson? I did not pick that up.

2.6.3 Miss N. Balderson:

Sorry. Is reporting something preventing the crimes from happening though?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

No, of course it is not, but what we have got to make sure is we have the appropriate laws in place, but what will help the reductions in this area, if potential perpetrators are aware that they are more

likely to be reported and then they are more likely to be investigated and possibly prosecuted. If they are not reported, they will tend more to feel that they can get away with it and that is not good.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. I have Ellie Daniel next. I am not sure if Miss Daniel wants to ask a question or it is Josephine Peel.

2.6.4 Miss J. Peel of Jersey College for Girls:

Yes, it is Josephine. What measures are in place to combat youth crime in Jersey? Current measures are not sufficient, which is clear, as curfews are regularly broken by youths.

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I am not quite sure what Miss Peel means by youth crime. Certainly right at the top of our minds at the moment, there is a small cohort of young people who are causing challenges, particularly in the town area. Of course challenges with young people have always been there and will continue, I have no doubt, to a greater or lesser extent. I think it is because some children and young people are not always fortunate enough to have a stable, loving and safe family environment to grow up in. Some of the early years' experience has probably contributed to the sort of behaviour we are seeing. We cannot find a solution by enforcement alone, it has got to be a cross-Government agency approach. The police are working with the Youth Service, C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) and the Children's Commissioner to get programmes in place to divert young people with the sort of difficulties I have spoken about away from crime and to give them a different outlet for whatever it is that they wish to do. It is not simply enforcement, it is about finding the right programmes to support these youngsters and keep them away from crime and the criminal justice system.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Miss Peel, another question?

2.6.5 Miss J. Peel:

Yes. What steps are the Government directly taking to stop this from happening and to stop people being followed home with knives and things like that?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

What we have been able to do over the last year or so is to increase the number of police officers in the force from 190 to 215, so there will be more police officers either on foot or in vehicles patrolling the town and giving people support where necessary. Also, it is not only the States of Jersey Police, but the Honorary Police too have increased in numbers over the last year. There was quite a successful recruitment campaign, so they are there to help and support the community and protect them from all sorts of crime.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. I see Chloe Connor next.

2.6.6 Miss C. Connor of Jersey College for Girls:

Are you considering following France's example by making street harassment illegal and/or implementing fines for perpetrators?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

Making what illegal, sorry?

Miss C. Connor:

Street harassment.

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I do not know particularly about street harassment, but any harassment could be a criminal offence in any event under our current legislation.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Do you have a supplementary, Miss Connor?

2.6.7 Miss C. Connor:

Street harassment as in sexual harassment in the street, e.g. cat-calling or wolf-whistling.

The Connétable of St. Clement:

Any inappropriate behaviour towards ladies, girls, young men is potentially an offence under the Sexual Offences (Jersey) Law 2018, and behaviour like that needs to be reported. It is not for me to make a judgment about which actions are legal or illegal. At the end of the day, that comes down to the Crown Officers, but if anybody is being harassed in this sort of way, then it needs to be reported, as I said earlier, because if they are not reported, the people who perpetrate these type of offences will feel that they can get away with it and that is wrong.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. In the Assembly I have Jude Anketiel.

2.6.8 Miss J. Anketiel of Beaulieu:

What are your thoughts on implementing a curfew for men to make Jersey's streets safer for women at night?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I do not like the idea of curfews. Is the question suggesting that only females should be allowed to walk around town at certain times of the day or night? While most sexual offences are perpetrated against females, males too do have occasions of sexual assault. No, I think we need to treat people equally.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. Do you have a supplementary, Miss Anketiel. No. In that case ... sorry, I have just seen another question in the feed. Kenan Bryan would like to ask another question.

2.6.9 Mr. K. Bryan:

Helping Jersey's streets to be safe, we need to keep young people engaged. Would the Minister agree that the Government needs to provide the Jersey Youth Service with more funding to allow them to be on the streets on a Friday and Saturday night?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

Is that the question? I do not know that they do need more funding. That will be a matter for the Minister for Education to decide and make his case, but certainly I have been aware. I have been out on a number of occasions - not recently, of course, because of COVID - on Friday and Saturday night and the Youth Service has always had a significant presence.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Naomi Balderson, you have a question for the Minister.

2.6.10 Miss N. Balderson:

Yes. Do you have the statistics comparing male to female sexual harassment in Jersey?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

Not with me. No, sorry.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

I have a question in the Chamber from Katie Le Saint.

2.6.11 Miss K. Le Saint:

What are you doing to raise awareness and help combat danger on the streets?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

Sorry, I could not hear the question.

Miss K. Le Saint:

What are you doing to raise awareness and help combat danger on the streets?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

During any particular year, we have quite a number of awareness campaigns, social media campaigns to let people know what the issues actually are. As I said before during this Question Time, the most important thing is that when people do feel threatened or when they are threatened that they report it. That is going to be the greatest deterrent and the greatest piece of security for young women or any women, girls and young men as well. It is a matter of having faith in the police, and people should have faith in the police because they do listen and they do take any allegations of this sort of activity very, very seriously.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. I would like to put the last question to Miss Le Brocq. Do you have a final question, Miss Le Brocq?

2.6.12 Miss Le Brocq:

Do you think more should be done in schools?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I am not quite sure what the question means. Should more be done in schools? What area should more be done in schools?

Miss Le Brocq:

To educate young boys and girls about what not to do.

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I think there is a place for that in schools. There is also a place for that in families as well. The Island and all agencies, all individuals, have got to play their part.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you very much, Minister. I would like to now ask Olivia Kawala of Jersey College for Girls, who will ask a question of Deputy Judy Martin of St. Helier, who is the Minister for Social Security. Miss Kawala.

2.7 Miss O. Kawala of the Minister for Social Security regarding period products.

Will you be making period products free for all people?

Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier (The Minister for Social Security):

Thank you for the question. In a response to a petition on this subject earlier this year, I committed to undertake further work on the issue of period poverty in Jersey so as to understand the extent of the issue and the needs of those affected. A key part of that work will include hearing directly from women and girls in order to gain their views and their experiences. In addition, it is also necessary to consider the cost implications of providing free period products, both to ensure the Government makes the most effective use of public resources and so we can begin to consider how any requirement of free period products might be best funded. Once this work is completed, an informed decision can be made about the extent of any free provision in Jersey.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. Miss Kawala, do you have a supplementary?

2.7.1 Miss O. Kawala:

Yes, please. The response you have just given is very much the same as the response you gave in December. What have you done since then?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Since then, I have met with a charity that provides free products to schools. I have had conversations with representatives in education. I am eagerly awaiting the Scottish implementation, because I certainly would not want to reinvent the wheel. I would like to know how, if it is free for everybody, it is actually going to be implemented. That was only passed I think November last year, so eagerly awaiting and talking. As I say, more views. We need to get to the people this is affecting, so if anyone can speak to your school, in your workplace and make sure that the consultation will be coming out.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. I now have a question from Matilda Garrod for you. Matilda.

[15:00]

2.7.2 Miss M. Garrod:

When the States are deciding how taxpayers' money is spent, is it right that instead of reducing prices of period products or making them free, Members are prioritising themselves with the previously mentioned costs, like free parking?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Again, there are 49 Members and we park for a little time. I do not know the cost. I think it could be hundreds of thousands to £1 million. Are there other things I could make free or supplement more? That is why I need to know the problem. Really I think I will leave it there. I absolutely understand what you are asking me. There is always a weighing up to who needs this. I do not even know where I would start. I am told that a lot of girls now start their period about 9 and then you go up to 55, because a lot of women have their period until 55. All these decisions need to come out in the talks that I am looking for.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Do you have a supplementary, Miss Garrod?

Miss M. Garrod:

No.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Ellie Daniel, do you have a question?

2.7.3 Miss E. Daniel:

Yes. Just to answer the question that you just asked, the cost of the parking for the States Members is £184,000 a year. Could that not be used? The reason that you do not know how many children need these products and the cost of that is because you do not have a sufficient amount of statistics on child poverty, so do you not think that you should be spending that? Could that money not be spent on the period products if you knew the right amount of children who needed them?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Miss Daniels just put a completely different question to me. Is it just for people at school? The question is for all. The petition was following Scotland to make free period products for all who need them. Yes, we could take the money away from parking. It needs to be sustainable money, we need to know what we are addressing, absolutely fair point, but again, would free period products come above something else like free school meals? These are all decisions that when you know the evidence you can absolutely decide where to put your taxpayers' money, which is all of us who pay taxes.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Does anybody else have a question for the Minister? Very well, if not, I will put the final question to Miss Kawala.

2.7.4 Miss O. Kawala:

You do not give free school meals, so what are you doing to help that?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

I was comparing if we had any extra money or when we raise any extra money what would win. Would it be free school meals? Are there children who need free school meals more than there are young women who need free period products? I am sorry, I do not know the answer to that. We are getting more statistics, we are getting better at collecting these statistics, but when you make a case you have to know you have the money and which case out of those would win. If they both win, again they have to be costed. This question is for all people, so for all women to have free period products. I need to look much deeper into that before I can say yes.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. That was the final question. We now move on to a question from Axel Nixon of De La Salle. He is going to ask a question of Deputy Russell Labey of St. Helier, Minister for Housing and Communities. Mr. Nixon.

2.8 Mr. A. Nixon of De La Salle College of the Minister for Housing and Communities regarding affordable housing in Jersey.

Does the Minister consider it important to ensure that there is enough affordable housing available in Jersey?

Deputy R. Labey of St. Helier (The Minister for Housing and Communities):

There are a number of important issues which need to be addressed about the current housing situation in Jersey. One of those is affordability, and I recognise the importance of creating a product which allows Jersey residents to buy their own home. I want to ensure that local talent is encouraged to stay on the Island or return to the Island and addressing affordability will certainly help, and is a priority not only for me, but for the Council of Ministers as a whole. Addressing affordable housing options is a recommendation from the Housing Policy Development Board and has already been incorporated into the Government Plan for 2021-24. Work will commence in 2022 to evaluate a suitable single affordable home ownership product. A sum of £10 million has been held in reserve

to deliver this. Andium Homes already operates its successful Homebuy affordable home ownership product. Legacy home ownership products will remain in place until the expiry of existing agreements.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. Mr. Nixon, do you have a supplementary?

2.8.1 Mr. A. Nixon:

Yes, I do. You talk about keeping local talent on the Island. What is your opinion on more heavily regulating share transfers and foreign property investors to ensure that property prices stay reasonable for young talent?

Deputy R. Labey:

I am on record before I became Minister for Housing and Communities of being against the ability for people living in Moscow, Singapore, wherever, to increase their property portfolio by buying property in Jersey via share transfer. It does not seem right when so many local people are looking for housing and that it can be snapped up by investors. The industry might say they need the investment money, but I am pleased to see that that will not be happening on the waterfront in future.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. Now, on the chat I have a question indicated from Stuart Langhorn. I do not think the question is from him, so please could you indicate who is asking the question? From my list, that is Chloe Connor. Chloe Connor, would you like to ask a question of the Minister?

2.8.2 Miss C. Connor:

How will you be ensuring that there is enough affordable housing for all, as you do not have the statistics of children of divorces living in poverty? That would suggest that a child who is half living in poverty and half not living in poverty would not actually have to have a house when they are not with the parent who is above the poverty line.

Deputy R. Labey:

It does not matter whether you are selling hosepipes or houses, if there is more demand than supply, prices are going to go up. What I am principally focused on is ensuring that we do get a steady increased supply of homes available to both buy and rent, and especially affordable homes. Now, we have seen that there are lots of plans around. We have seen that Ann Court is being developed; La Collette Low-Rise is being developed by Andium Homes. Those are the ones under construction. There are also plans for Gas Place, for Ann Street Brewery, for the Metropole Hotel, the Apollo Hotel, the Kensington, but none of those have planning permission. As we have seen with Gas Place, when they do not get planning permission, that holds things up. One of my chief focuses since becoming Minister just a matter of weeks ago is to try and do something to get Government to let the housing providers know - Andium, the Housing Trusts, S.o.J.D.C. (States of Jersey Development Company) - sooner what States-owned land might be coming their way. We have a pipeline, but that pipeline needs to stretch further into the future. We need to make sure that the right houses are being built for the groups which you have referenced as well. We are going to have a strategic officer to look at what is in the pipeline in terms of the product, one-bed, 2-bed, 4-bed and so on, to make sure that, including in the private sector, we are building the right homes, but we have to get Government to help the suppliers and help the developers by releasing land earlier. Easier said than done, but now we have got certainty with the hospital and with the Government building, I am confident that we can do that.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. Olivia Kawala, you would like to ask a question of the Minister.

2.8.3 Miss O. Kawala:

In the eyes of the Government, what is the definition of affordable?

Deputy R. Labey:

That is a very good question. I am not sure that it has ever been defined in that way. I do not have those figures, but what I said when I decided to run for this job - when the Chief Minister asked me to do it, it was quite a surprise - but what I really hope for, the ultimate aim is to ensure that everybody in Jersey who wants to buy a house and can buy a house, can buy a house. Supply is a big part of that that I have referenced in my last answer, but it is not supply alone. Because of the strange situation with Jersey, we have to help people. Government have to help people with a product, a financial product, that will enable them to buy their own home. A lot of people are renting at high rents and cannot afford to save for a deposit, so is there something we can do to help people get a deposit? That I would like to see. The S.o.J.D.C., with the Jersey College for Girls development, did say to their buyers: "Look, you can buy off-plan, in terms of put your name down for this thing. It will be yours in 2 years' time once it has been built and you have got the 2 years to save the deposit." That is what a lot of people did and that is a good scheme.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. Chloe Connor would like to ask a supplementary.

2.8.4 Miss C. Connor:

I think you may have misinterpreted my last question, as a house is not like a hosepipe. You do not have the statistics about children of divorced parents, where half of them are living in poverty, so it does not matter about the amount of houses available or their cost if you do not know that these children exist, as they will not have a house to live in.

Deputy R. Labey:

That is a very, very good point. I will certainly chase that up.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. Does anybody else have any further questions? If not, I will ask Mr. Nixon to ask his supplementary, his final question.

2.8.5 Mr. A. Nixon:

This one is a little bit more off-topic, but is still on the topic of housing. Currently you cannot develop on a listed building and change something as simple as putting double-glazed windows into a Victorian house. However, the States are planning to demolish the Mayfair Hotel on St. Saviour's Road, where there are Victorian houses within 50 metres, and this demolition could compromise the foundations of these Victorian houses, which is more of a change than changing windows to double-glazing. How is this fair?

Deputy R. Labey:

That is a very specific question to the Mayfair. I had not heard that there were concerns about the listed buildings that neighbour the Mayfair, but it does happen everywhere. It happens in St. Helier an awful lot, and elsewhere in the Island, that a new development will be cheek by jowl with listed buildings. Since I entered the States in 2014, I have been very, very active on promoting our built heritage and recognition of it and I would not want to see any relaxation in those rules. There is a new Island Plan coming along. We will have to see what it says about windows, but I have always thought if we are saying to a house owner: "Look, you have got a listed property and I know you want to put double-glazing in, but we would really like you to have a product that is suitable for the listing and that is going to cost a bit more" in certain circumstances, I would like to see - it is not my

department, it is Planning and Environment - a scheme where we can help homeowners to get the product if they need it.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. I would like to now ask Diana Casegas of Hautlieu, who will ask a question of Deputy Hugh Raymond of Trinity, Assistant Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture.

2.9 Miss D. Casegas of Hautlieu of the Assistant Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture regarding the location of the skateboard park.

I would like to ask why the skateboard park is being proposed in such an inaccessible location?

[15:15]

Deputy H.C. Raymond of Trinity (Assistant Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture):

Good afternoon to everybody. As you know, our overall aim is to improve the Island-wide availability of skate parks and urban sports facilities. We have therefore submitted planning applications for skate parks at 2 sites to help us achieve this. One application has been made for South Hill Gardens in St. Helier. This would provide a facility in the centre of the Island accessible to all users in town and the surrounding area, easily accessible by foot or short bus ride from most areas. A second application has been made for Les Quennevais Sports Centre, St. Brelade. This would provide a facility for the west of the Island and will be more accessible for people who live in St. Brelade and the surrounding parishes. We also hope to provide for the north of the Island by making improvements to the existing facility at St. John's Recreation Centre and we are seeking a site in the eastern parishes to provide for the east of this Island.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Assistant Minister. Miss Casegas, do you have a supplementary?

2.9.1 Miss D. Casegas:

Yes. I understand that there was a survey asking people how they felt about a skateboard park but given that skateboarding does not appeal to everyone, what surveys were undertaken to establish what other young people in Jersey want to do?

The Deputy of Trinity:

We have been following through. You have probably been reading about the Inspiring Active Places and that is that we want to make sure that as many of our youngsters and older people get back to doing some active sporting event, whether it be bowls, whether it be tennis, whether it be cricket or whatever. We went across most of the schools and most of the younger groups to see how best we can provide the facilities that people want. We have a strong culture here of people wanting to be outside taking part in sporting events and with all the COVID situations over the last 12 or 18 months a lot of us, as we all know, have been locked up. Now we want to make sure that we can get it going again and get more people involved in as many sporting activities as we can.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Assistant Minister. Chloe Connor would like to ask you a question.

2.9.2 Miss C. Connor:

Do you think that there is a correlation between the lack of recreational activities for young people in Jersey and the increase in adolescent crime?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I have to say that is a very good question. In my past, as being President of the Honorary Police, I always used to make the comment that I would rather people would take part in activities where they would enjoy themselves with other people, than some of the problems that are occurring in the parishes at this present moment. I found one of the comments that was always made to me and it still is made sometimes now: “Well there is nothing to do on the Island.” I think when I look across the Island and see how many sporting facilities we have and some of the top-class sporting facilities we have, I just wish we can encourage more people to get involved. I would add one other thing here, that it gives me sort of an opportunity to say that I think the Island has fantastic opportunities to push itself as a sports tourism place. People like coming here and if they can play sport on a very good ground or facilities, then they will come more often. That is one of my aims really to get across to everybody as we try to get out of this COVID pandemic situation.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Assistant Minister. Do you have a supplementary, Miss Connor?

2.9.3 Miss C. Connor:

Yes, I do. I assume you understand that we have to pay for these sporting activities and there are people who are living in poverty that are not accounted for, as previously stated, who do not have that kind of money as they are trying to find a place to live; they are going to turn to these crimes, as was previously stated, so unless you start making things less expensive in Jersey the adolescent crime will increase.

The Deputy of Trinity:

Again, the sympathetic view is coming straight from me. One of the points at the top of my list every time we hold meetings is that it is no good saying that we are going to provide these facilities unless people can afford to use them. I think that we have to look at ways of making sure that we get people that cannot afford ... I do not like going through questions and answers and whether you can afford or not but we have got to make sure that we get everybody involved. I can assure you that that is one of the most essential things that I would like to push forward over the period of time. We do need a bit of money for that because we need to subsidise some of the people that really cannot afford to be able to pay some of the costs of playing some form of sports.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Assistant Minister. I have just heard you do not like asking a lot of questions and answers but I have got a lot of questions lining up for you here, so brace yourself. In the Chamber I would like to ask Katie Bishop to ask her question.

2.9.4 Miss K. Bishop of Beaulieu:

Why is so much time and money being spent on the skatepark instead of a sports like netball, which is a sport with a successful Island ...?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Obviously I do not know you but that is one of the perfect questions I thought I might not get asked. Let us just say that I think within the next couple of weeks there will be an announcement made as to a planning application being made to make sure that we can get netball into its own facilities sooner rather than later. I am treading on a little bit of ground here because a lot of it does concern fiscal stimulus money. But I hope and can assure you that we are very, very much looking forward to being able to say to the President of the Jersey Netball Association and her team: “At last we may have your netball courts ready for the middle of next year.”

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Good announcement. Miss Bishop, do you have a supplementary? No, okay. Next on my list is Moses Sappé, would you like to put your question?

2.9.5 Mr. M. Sappé of Victoria College:

As mentioned previously before, ensuring accessibility ahead of the resurgence of human activity as COVID restrictions decrease is very important, how do the States plan to deal with the large amount of activity in St. Ouen where parking is regularly full on summer days, especially during periods of good surfing conditions?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I cannot believe this, there was a meeting last week talking about that particular issue. The parishes had got together because there has been increase in the car parking along the Five Mile Road there and we wanted to make sure that surfing and all the facilities that go along there were able to carry on. In fact only Friday of last week I was with the R.N.L.I. (Royal National Lifeboat Institution) guards down there and it was great to hear they have increased their numbers; they are all local people. They are very keen to make sure that we give accessibility especially to the surfers down there. They certainly have been on my back with regards to me having chats with the Constables of the 3 parishes affected by that area. I can assure you they are all very, very keen to make sure that this works and allows people, especially, as I gather, we have 2 surfers that may well be on the fringes of getting into the Olympic Games in surfing and that is good news. They are going through the process at the present time, so we have got to make sure that we look after them and all the other surfers down there.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Indeed, lots of announcements in this question time.

The Deputy of Trinity:

I am just getting a little worried now.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Mr. Sappé, do you have a supplementary?

Mr. M. Sappé:

No further questions.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. Jennifer Rodrigues, would you like to put your question to the Assistant Minister? No, I am not hearing anything. Jennifer Rodrigues.

The Deputy of St. John:

May I suggest, ma'am, Miss Rodrigues is not close enough to her mic.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

I can hardly hear you.

Miss J. Rodrigues:

Can you hear me now?

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Yes.

2.9.6 Miss J. Rodrigues:

My question is, what are your plans to accommodate young people who are interested in other activities, not just sports?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Again, my colleague, Deputy Morel, is very much involved in the cultural side of the activities that go on and that means obviously things like the Arts Centre, the Opera House and there are huge discussions as well going on about that. Because there is no question that arts go with sport in a way that it makes people do things and get out to do things and I would very much encourage and, hopefully, let us just say we might hear some good things about that as well in the months to come with regards to the best way of dealing with that. There are a lot of talented people in the Island, both in the arts sector, which we will have to look after as well. That is why I am very much keen that both Deputy Morel and I work together on achieving what we would like to see at both ends of the spectrum; one in sport, one in leisure and one in culture.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Deputy. Miss Rodrigues, do you have a supplementary?

Miss J. Rodrigues:

No, thank you.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Okay, Noah Jervis, would you like to put your question?

2.9.7 Mr. N. Jervis:

It is currently very difficult for young people in Jersey to find a place to spend their free time without the expectation of spending money, except the library. Does the Minister believe there should be plans, future developments and community projects that allow young people to pursue their interests?

The Deputy of Trinity:

Yes, I certainly do. But I think it is not just sport or leisure, I think it comes into the youth club situation as well. I think that we have to encourage what we do through the youth clubs and everything else that goes on in the Island, where youngsters can get together, meet up and it is what one person gets from another. Many, many years ago I was a teacher and there is no question that if you want to get people involved you get groups of people together. We have got to make sure that we support the youth clubs, the youth centres and when we are building, and looking at my colleague, Deputy Labey, when you are building new estates and everything else there must be facilities, green bits, that people can use their expertise on and enjoy themselves. I think sometimes we tend to build properties in groups with very little aspect of youth clubs, youth centres and everything else. I would certainly run behind the fact that we should be looking now, whenever we look at a development, that we provide those sort of facilities.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Assistant Minister. Mr. Jervis, do you have a supplementary?

Mr. N. Jervis:

No, thank you.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. Katie Le Saint in the Chamber would like to ask you a question. Her question was asked, so I would like the final question to Miss Casegas, as the final supplementary.

Miss D. Casegas:

No, thank you.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Very well. The next question, Emily Byrne of Beaulieu who will ask a question of the Minister for Infrastructure. Miss Byrne.

2.10 Miss E. Byrne of Beaulieu of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding reducing cars on Jersey's roads

What measures are in place to reduce the number of cars on Jersey's roads?

Deputy K.C. Lewis (The Minister for Infrastructure):

On 7th December 2020 the Government published an update to the S.T.P. (Sustainable Transport Policy). This is available on the States website and outlines progress to date of the S.T.P. and the impact of COVID-19 on this area of Government work. Part of this work is to undertake policy analysis and development across active travel, bus service development, parking and mobility as a service. These 4 plans are currently being commissioned and will identify opportunities to decarbonise the transport network, as well as raise awareness of alternative modes of transport to reduce reliance on private vehicles to undertake our journeys.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. Miss Byrne, do you have a supplementary?

2.10.1 Miss E. Byrne:

As you have chosen not to outline these points yourself in your response, I have taken the liberty to read through our current goals and plans put on hold for the Sustainable Transport Policy. On page 5 of this document you are quoted saying: "The Minister for Infrastructure will continue to work closely with Liberty Bus to ensure a safe accessible public service." But we believe that a great way to do this would be through free bus fares for students. Have you considered this? To quote the Children's Commissioner's 2020 report: "Trying to make this happen in Jersey, children and young people find transport costs a particular barrier to accessing their rights." If we are unable to go to school, how do you propose we learn?

[15:30]

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

A very interesting question. Yes, it does come up in the States Assembly from time to time but there is no such word as free; free means someone else has to pay. The bus service is subsidised at the moment and particularly a school bus service, where you would pay £1 we actually pay £2 towards that same ticket, so it is heavily subsidised. A free service as such does not fit the model that we have with Liberty Bus. Liberty Bus is a private company, it has to run their own fares and we cannot interfere and say you must make all this free because that would just disrupt the model. But we do do quite a lot with them, for instance, we pay towards the service but that does not go to the bus company; that goes towards senior citizens and disabled people and carers now who get a bus pass. We do put a lot into the bus service. Liberty Bus have been mentioned in Westminster in the Houses of Parliament as an exemplary way to run a bus service; they have won so many awards. In fact I signed the contract with the present bus service and they were head and shoulders above the competition.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. I would now like to go to Jem Gurner, would you like to ask your question of the Minister?

2.10.2 Mr. J. Gurner:

Will the Government implement a law similar to the U.K. whereby 2030 all new vehicles must be electric or hybrid?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

In a word, yes, or maybe just in advance of the U.K. inasmuch as we do not want Jersey to be a dumping ground for vehicles they cannot sell in the U.K. We may bring this in just slightly ahead of the U.K. to prevent that happening. We are working with our colleagues in the Jersey Electricity Company. We have got quite a few electricity points around the Island. All our multi-storey car parks have at least 2 charging points, Pier Road now I believe has 10. We are doing everything we can to encourage people to switch to low-carbon vehicles, biodiesel and ozone. There is a synthetic petrol coming on to the market in the not too distant future and this we encourage.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. Mr. Gurner, do you have a supplementary?

Mr. J. Gurner:

No, thank you.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Noah Jervis, would you like to put your question to the Minister?

2.10.3 Mr. N. Jervis:

Does the Minister think that if we are to decarbonise our cars, that those who need cars will be able to get those cars at a sustainably affordable price?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

That is a very good question. Unfortunately, at the moment electric cars are expensive, like everything else when there is something new comes on the market they are expensive and within about 5 years they will come down to the same level as regular cars at the moment. But if you take the life of a car over a period of, say, 10 years, there would be no need ...

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

We are getting a lot of feedback on the line. Can you all make sure your microphones are turned off if you are not speaking?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

There is lots that can be done but I say the car obviously does not have an engine, there is no exhaust, so it is obviously clean. There is very little to do by way of servicing an electric car, by way of checking the batteries, electric motor and of course brakes, horn and lights but that is a very minimalist approach. If you look at a car over a period of its life it is good value for money. Also what is happening at the moment with the situation with car batteries, they are being improved day-by-day. It is just another cog in the wheel, as I say, with cleaner fuels, again, something we encourage.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Okay. I have got a lot of questions coming up, so I am not going to be asking the questioner if they would like to ask a supplementary. I will only be asking you for your actual question, other than the final question, which goes to Miss Byrne. I would like to now ask Emily Rodrigues to put her question to the Minister. Emily.

2.10.4 Miss E. Rodrigues:

Have you thought about pedestrianising St. Helier to reduce carbon emissions on the Island?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Very topical. Yes, and you will be well aware that Broad Street is at present closed and I did say that as soon as I get the green light to open it it will be reopened. But you will notice the Constable of St. Helier has brought a proposition to keep it closed and have it pedestrianised. I do like pedestrian areas but there is a very fine balance between having areas pedestrianised and keeping St. Helier town a very vibrant place to visit. Lots of, predominantly, senior citizens, I would say, like to use the bus stop in Broad Street, so having that cut off means they have to walk a little further. But it is trying to keep everybody happy, it is not easy but I do my best.

2.10.5 Mr. M. Sappé:

Will there be any financial incentive provided by the Government to buy alternative transport cars, due to the cost of these often being a limiting factor preventing people from buying them and consequently being able to reduce their carbon footprint?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Not at the moment. There are some governments in Europe that do provide subsidies to citizens towards electric vehicles. We do not have the funds to do that at the moment. But what we do is, say, if you buy an electric vehicle you get free parking for a year and that thereafter reduced parking in multi-storey car parks. We do everything we can to encourage. One of the problems with electric vehicles at the moment obviously is the charging point. If you live in a house with your own driveway you can plug it in to charge overnight. But one of the problems is if you live in an apartment you obviously cannot do that. It is getting enough charging points around the Island. It is a bit of a chicken and egg approach.

2.10.6 Miss A. Edonbos:

Has an environmental survey been done to weigh up the impact of school traffic and how it could be reduced if bus passes were free?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Yes, that is happening at the moment. One of my main priorities is safer routes to school for students. I am not sure which school you go to but the one off Bagatelle Road, Bagatelle Lane, I am not sure if you use that one, which is a safer routes to school now, it has been made one-way, virtual footpath and reduced traffic speed, also new zebra crossings. We will be working with the Parish of St. Saviour for another one at Bon Air Lane, which will help students coming along to Grainville and J.F.C. (Jersey Football Club).

2.10.7 Mr. B. Hathy of De La Salle:

Following the proposal of Freddie's Law, will you be planning on making any further changes to make our Island safer for pedestrians and other road users?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Yes, a very good question. I supported Freddie's Law with a very slight amendment from the Constable of St. Martin. Obviously we want to keep everybody safe. As I say, I want to put in as many cycle lanes as I can. It is not easy because we have approximately 110,000 people living in Jersey and we are 9 miles by 5 and it is trying to retrofit the Island for cycle lanes. It is very, very difficult. In fact the Chair always asked me on a regular basis when she was going to get her eastern cycle track, I am pushing very hard but it is very, very difficult. We have got an enormous amount of hoops to jump through, getting permissions to go across various bits of land. But it is something I want to pursue and as soon as I can I would like to get them open. I have got one opening up in town in the not too distant future. You will be able to cycle up Hill Street as a cut-through from town in a segregated cycle lane, take a left down La Motte Street and cycle that way from west to east

across town. Fingers crossed everything is going through and that should be in the next few weeks. Also, I have got some bus lanes which have been announced today and that should shorten journeys by bus going east and west from the bus station.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. Yes, it is very difficult sitting in this chair and trying to remain impartial; that is the most difficult side of it. Naomi Balderson.

2.10.8 Miss N. Balderson:

Why are there no specific targets attached to environmental issues, including transport, in the Government Plan?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

We do have targets, they are very, very difficult to achieve. We did not see COVID coming obviously, so lots of things are delayed and a few things on the backburner. Lots of my particular team, Infrastructure, were taken off to other duties, which has delayed quite a few projects. But now they are coming back into the department and we are getting everything restarted again. As I say, we have got several projects, one of which was announced today.

2.10.9 Miss O. Kawala:

If, as Ministers, you are trying to encourage sustainable transport, why do you have free parking?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Are you referring to States Members, as in free parking?

Miss O. Kawala:

Yes.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Yes. That is just, more or less, one day every 3 weeks when we are back in the Chamber. Obviously lots of us are working from home at the moment. It is a throwback from the old days really when States Members were allowed to park in Royal Square but then the Royal Square was paved over, so it was thought that Members should have parking elsewhere. If you were in the middle of a States debate it would be really awful if everybody got up and walked out of the Chamber to walk up the hill to the car park to get their scratch cards marked up. It was thought it was prudent just to have this. But, as I say, it is more or less one day every 3 weeks and not everybody uses it, possibly half to three-quarters of Members use it. Some Members, I have seen them, they turn up on their electric bikes, great transport and park outside of the States Chamber. Quite a few Members catch a bus and I know several, myself included, being a St. Saviour Deputy, walk to the States Chamber.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

I would like to ask Eleanor Bailey to put her question.

2.10.10 Miss E. Bailey of Beaulieu:

In regards to the efficiency of the bus routes, currently, for example, to get from St. Mary to St. John, which is only a 5-minute drive, you have to get the bus into town and come back on yourself. This is not practical and not eco-friendly. Is there anything in place to make Jersey more accessible to all?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

A good question. Several projects have been tried. There was a parish shuttle system which was tried where people would walk towards their parish halls and a mini bus would take you on varied

routes around the Island to your next stop. This tied in with the main bus routes coming backwards and forwards to town. Sadly, it did not take off and there were very few people using it. But Liberty Bus are a very forward-thinking company and they do try specific routes now and again to see if there is an active take-up. You have to keep it going for several months just to see if there is take-up from the public and, sadly, they have done a few of those where it is not. We are also victims of our geography because I think the Island slopes from north to south and all the valleys run from north to south, so St. Helier, if you like, is like spokes of a wagon wheel where all the roads lead off from. It is not that easy to get cross-country buses. As I say, Liberty Bus do try it from time to time.

2.10.11 Miss K. Le Saint:

In relation to the bus fares, I am sure you agree the education of our community is of vital importance. Do you believe the Government should then subsidise those who are unable to pay or offer a scheme like you do for the elderly?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

As I mentioned previously, that for every £1 that you pay for the school bus we pay £2, so we are subsidising that quite heavily. The fleet of buses is normally reserved just for students. It is a costly operation because the bus drivers on the school runs just specifically do the school run but they come in in the morning to take you to your school and in the evening they take you home again.

[15:45]

There are students who use a combination of the school bus and the regular service, which is terrific. But, as I say, it is an expensive service to run. We do subsidise it as much as we can. If there are people who cannot, for whatever means, afford the bus, then I believe there are systems in place regarding Social Security who would help out with transport costs, I believe.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

The final question to Emily Byrne.

Miss E. Byrne:

No more questions, thank you very much.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

No more questions, okay. She does not have a final question. We are now going to turn to questions without notice. I do not know if the Chief Minister is online but we have 15 minutes of questions without notice and that is open to everybody. You are going to have to bear with me because I am looking at my screen and I am looking in the States Chamber to see who wants to ask a question. Like I say, just bear with me. Chief Minister, are you online ready?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Yes, I am ready and raring to go.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Okay, right, we can see you now. We have got 15 minutes from now and I can see Kenan Bryan would like to ask the first question. Kenan, would you like to ask your question of the Chief Minister?

3. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Chief Minister

3.1 Mr. K. Bryan:

What measures are in place to ensure that those in Government and those who aspire to enter Government have the correct checks to ensure all Members are fit to serve their constituency, department and Island?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré (The Chief Minister):

That is less of a question for the Chief Minister and more something for the Chair of the Privileges and Procedures Committee. Essentially, there are legal requirements and declarations you have to make when standing for election. Once one has stood for election and been elected there are no further measures that are put in place because, generally, all States Members are treated as equal. The Chief Minister nominates and the Assembly, ultimately, elects Ministers to those posts. The Ministers then, essentially, select in conjunction with myself and the Assistant Ministers, we are doing it from a pool that the electorate have approved. There are 2 issues, both conflicting, one is potentially these days it might be worthwhile to have more rigorous checks on anybody standing. I would not necessarily be in disagreement with that. It would be something to discuss with P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee). The other side of course is that if you put extra measures in place, once someone has been elected by the electorate, are you interfering with the democratic choice of that electorate for that person to represent them to their fullest extent?

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Chief Minister. I am not going to allow supplementaries because there are a lot of questions coming in. I am going to take one question from everyone and then if we have got time after the 15 minutes we will then go back to second questions. Naomi Balderson.

3.2 Miss M. Garrod:

It is Matilda Garrod. According to a Freedom of Information request disclosed in 2014 and 2018 induction programmes were proposed for elected States Members to address safeguarding issues for children and young people. The States denied the request for these programmes to be mandatory and in light of these current events, can it be right that attendance on the induction programme is still not mandatory? There is nothing in place to enforce these and that the Greffier of the States does not have a record of who attends the programme.

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I think there is certainly a case for saying that attendance to these type of programmes should be encouraged. There is a point, as I was saying in answer to the previous question, about what you can compel a democratic elected politician to do because, essentially, to make it mandatory there has to be a consequence for not attending. It is very rarely in the gift of the Assembly to remove Members, for example. It does get complicated from that perspective. It is not quite as clear cut as you suggest. But I do endorse the view that the induction process has evolved quite a lot over time, compared to certainly when I started - and the Deputy of Grouville started before me - and so we had different induction programmes. It is now very rigorous and regimented, as it were; there is always more that one can do in this area.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. Chief Minister, you may have to keep your answers a little shorter, so that we can fit everyone in. Olivia Kawala.

3.3 Miss O. Kawala:

Three days ago the Government States Employment Board was fined £80,000 for breaching Health and Safety Law at Orchard House. Why do the taxpayers have to pay for something that they did not do? How can we improve the system so the Government's negligence does not end up coming out of Jersey's pockets?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Another good question. The short answer is that the reality is when, for example, the States Employment Board gets fined it does go round in a circle, as the money comes out of a fund and goes

into another fund, which ultimately ends back in the pocket of the taxpayer. But it is making a point that where there are breaches that have taken place and the States Employment Board did acknowledge that very serious breach in what was a health and safety issue, particularly in relation to a patient, by acknowledging that and by those fines and by that process being in place, it then very much concentrates the minds of those who are at the forefront of doing these to try to ensure that these things do not happen again. By making them a very public process obviously that comes up to the board, it will make us accountable to the Assembly and also to the electorate and it also means that the board will ensure - and the board does take these things very, very seriously - that the appropriate measures are put in place to try to ensure these type of things do not happen again.

3.4 Mr. J. de Costa of De La Salle:

Obviously it is quite important for people wishing to live in Jersey to speak fluent English. Would the Minister consider bringing in an English aptitude test for any foreign nationals wishing to stay and live in Jersey?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I have to say we have covered that in terms of a debate within the Assembly within probably the last month to 2 months. Essentially, there is a test done through, essentially, British citizenship that does cover all that. But we also retained the requirement to be a British citizen to become a politician.

3.5 Miss C. Le Fondré of Beaulieu:

How much would the Chief Minister consider that the actions of politicians are sometimes based on their personal interest and image, rather than the interests of the Island and the population of Jersey?

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Did you get that?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I got a lot of echo. It would be helpful if it could be repeated.

Miss C. Le Fondré:

How much would the Chief Minister consider that the actions of politicians are sometimes based on their personal interest and image, rather than the interests of the Island and the population of Jersey?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

It is certainly true that we have an Assembly of, broadly speaking, 49 independent Members and there will be lots of different views that accompany those 49. But I think the fundamental principle is that challenge is good and necessary but it should always be constructive challenge, definitely not based on personality or just for the sake of politics or politicking because that is definitely not in the interests of the Island.

3.6 Miss E. Byrne:

Why are there not Island-wide recycling centres with regular collections accessible to all and what happens to our recycling?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

With regards to the former part of the question, I think the simple answer is there are, certainly from my perspective, and if you look on the gov.je website you will see where they are and open times and what they will take. In terms of what happens to our recycling, I do not think I can answer that in a short period of time but it is all dealt with in differing ways, such that it is recycled appropriately.

3.7 Mr. D. Kayley:

As an old Victorian, why have you not pushed the States Education Board to advertise the post of headmaster of Victoria College, despite the frustration from the Board of Governance over the inaction?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

That is not a question I can directly answer, other than to say I have been appraised of the correspondence and looking at it at the moment.

3.8 Mr. J. Gurner:

How can we be confident that the Government will commit to building a new £100 million sports facility, as promised, given their previous unsuccessful plans to develop Fort Regent?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Again, splitting into 2, the sports strategy, a lot of the things that we are doing are dealing with a lot of legacy issues that stretch back decades and have not been addressed. You will have seen over the last few weeks and, hopefully, also going forward that we are starting to announce either longer-term plans and, hopefully, implementing early stages of it. In terms of the sports strategy, I anticipate some announcements to be coming out about funding the very first stages of parts of that sports strategy, essentially, in the next 10 days. Looking ahead but obviously £100 million is a huge sum of money, if you spread it out over 10 years, that is £10 million a year, which is still a large sum of money, is manageable and that is very much then down to the political will of the relevant Council of Ministers, plural, to go back into their budgets. In terms of Fort Regent, we have been very clear, we want to see things moving forward. Again, there will be announcements coming through in the next few weeks, again, splitting down between short-term actions that can be done before the next elections, in other words activity happening, versus longer-term plans which then can be consulted on and it is about putting the soul back into Fort Regent.

3.9 Mr. A. Willetts:

Will Millbrook playing fields be returned to a green space once the Nightingale Hospital is dismantled?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

The short answer is yes.

3.10 Miss E. Rodrigues:

If you are so capable in your job, then why have so many of your Ministers resigned or joined Scrutiny?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Yes, that is an interesting question. In terms of when we appoint the Ministers, obviously I put a team together. I think that is when you sometimes get into political decisions, which one or 2 Ministers may regret. For example, around the vote of confidence where we lost a Minister and at least one, if not 2 Assistant Ministers, that was their decision and they felt for whatever reasons that they wanted to support the vote of no confidence and their decision was obviously wrong and not supported by the Assembly. That is known as politics, unfortunately. In terms of another Minister who has chosen to stand down, that was a very specific decision, particularly around disagreements on keeping the schools open during the COVID pandemic. Ultimately, various people have had different approaches as a result of the COVID pandemic and we deal with those as we can. In terms of the team I lead, I still am very pleased with the support I receive from that team and I believe we have achieved a huge amount, despite sometimes not always being reported in the best way, in terms of dealing with a lot of the legacy issues that have not been addressed for a long time and also bringing

this Island through the pandemic. We are not out of it yet but to date we have steered ourselves to a good place.

3.11 Mr. H. Devenport of Victoria College:

How would you feel about possible electoral reform in Jersey that would facilitate party politics?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I think there is an argument that says that the next debate in the Assembly on 20th April which, if you are not aware, removes Senators from existence, will, I would suggest, probably facilitate party politics. I have to say my view on an Island 9 by 5, it is a fantastic place, we are a small island, we are an independent legislature, I tend to think actually to date - and we will see how it goes - that Islanders prefer independent politicians because then you are dealing with the issues. What I think we are starting to see sometimes is opposition politics, and I do not mean that in party terms but sometimes parties or individuals for opposition sake, and that is not in the interest of the Island.

3.12 Mr. J. Black of Hautlieu:

Jersey's next election will be contested under a new electoral voting system, its aim is to be more democratic, does the Chief Minister believe that Constables have a place in the system when they are often undemocratic or unelected?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

The short answer is yes. Indeed, the Connétables put forward an amendment which was adopted, from memory, by the Assembly, which is that even when they are nominated it is an uncontested nomination, that essentially a none-of-the-above option is introduced into the voting system. Therefore, that particular accusation will no longer be applicable.

[16:00]

What I would say is that one has to make a choice, either one supports the culture of the Island in terms of the longstanding traditions of the parish system and all that goes with it, including the honorary system, of which the Connétable is the pinnacle of that within the parish. I am not saying the system is perfect but I equally say that we have been very well served across the Island for many, many years by it. One has to make a choice there or just to, essentially, lose that part of our Island identity and move to something that is more of a homogenous system.

3.13 Mr. A. Nixon:

Yes, I had a question which is outside of politics. What life advice would you give teenagers moving into adulthood?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I was tempted to say do not go into politics. But I think the point would be that Jersey is a fantastic place but it is also worth going away, getting some experience to appreciate how fantastic the place is and then coming back and bringing that experience back to the Island.

3.14 Miss C. Connor:

On a day where there has been national concern about misogyny in our society, what steps have you personally taken to combat it?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I think what I would say is that if you look at the organisation as a whole and so we split this into 2; we talk about politics and we talk about the public sector. Within the public sector we have a variety of programmes around narrowing the gender pay gap or trying to. There is a new report coming out, at least we are identifying it and once you have identified the problem then you can address it. We

have programmes within the workforce which have started in the last 2½ years or so, including a thing called “I Will”, which is about encouraging women in senior leadership within the organisation. It is about mentoring, it is about supporting women in senior roles and providing clarity on career pathways and things like that. In the political sphere I was the first Chief Minister ever, to have a female Deputy Chief Minister. I have had the most number of women Ministers previously. If you look back at the last 4 Council of Ministers, other than ours, the first one had one woman in terms of Ministers, the second one had none, the third one had one and the last one had 3. I nominated 5, of which the Assembly voted for 4. I would suggest that we have made inroads into dealing with the type of problem you are alluding to but, equally, I believe we have got further to go.

3.15 Miss A. Edonbos:

In 2020 the Children’s Commissioner published a report called “Our Life in Numbers”. The report made several recommendations that the Government of Jersey should fill in the gaps where data is missing in vulnerable children, children living in poverty and children at risk. What steps, if any, has the Chief Minister made to address the data gaps identified within the 2020 report?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I have to say it is a good question. When Ministers say it is a good question it means we do not know the answer. The reason I am saying that is obviously all the way through 2020 my main focus has been on dealing with the pandemic. I do obviously recall the report when it was issued and we have got a lot of measures in place about improving specifically Children’s Services. But I cannot put my finger on right at this moment on specific measures we have put in place. In terms specifically to children, what I can tell you is that one of the problems we have had and we have been public about is that our overall I.T. (information technology) systems are, frankly, very, very out of date and I think that is the polite expression. Therefore, things like data collection, what you might expect, particularly in the area of what you see in your schools and what you can do on your smart phones, is not what we see and can collect as a Government. What we have done is we have put a huge sum of money, starting now, spread over the next few years to seriously improve the I.T. systems, which then means you can then start, if you like, bridging those gaps that you refer to but also all across the entire organisation. I suppose that is the wider answer. We have put a lot of money into starting to implement improvements in the I.T. systems but like a number of the legacy issues we have been dealing with, that will take a while to bear fruit.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Chief Minister. We have got 4 more minutes. I am going to give this session 4 more minutes. I am still going through those who are asking a first question and then if we have got time for one or 2 of those that want to ask another. Emily Rodrigues, would you like to ask your question?

3.16 Miss E. Rodrigues:

Earlier today we have only heard from one female Minister. Earlier this year you ignored the advice from the former Minister for Education. Why is there an underrepresentation of female Ministers working in the Government of Jersey? Do you have something against female Ministers?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I think we need to clarify one point there, the difference of opinion between the former Minister for Education and the rest of the Competent Authorities, we were very supportive and understood her position but the advice that we received was very, very clearly presented by what we call S.T.A.C. (Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell), which is, essentially, an advisory body - I would emphasise advisory - that informs what we call the Competent Authority Ministers, that is the Ministers that are basically handling the health aspects of the crisis. S.T.A.C. were very, very clear that the damage caused by closing schools far, far outweighed any ... and it is a very, very low risk of spreading within schools from COVID, particularly given the extra measures that we put in place in early

January. In terms of the rest of the positions, you have obviously got a Minister in the Chair at the moment and the Minister is one of my Assistant Chief Ministers. As I said earlier, I am the first Chief Minister to have a female Deputy Chief Minister and that is out 5 Chief Ministers. At the beginning of when we were elected, 4 Ministers were women; I nominated 5. Relative to previous Councils of Ministers the first one in 2005 had one woman Minister, the second one had none, the third one had one and the last one had 3. I have done more and, equally, I do make the point - I cannot remember if I said it last time round - that in relation to my fifth nomination a number of the prominent spokespersons in the Assembly, who very much promote women and are female did vote against that fifth female candidate. Obviously they felt that their alternative choice was their preference. I hope that helps to answer your question and, hopefully, that refutes some of your comments.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Chief Minister. Can you try and keep your answers a bit quicker? Can I ask Ellie Daniel, please?

3.17 Miss E. Daniel:

Does the Chief Minister have a system in place to combat the growing issues coming to light about sexual harassment in schools and the workplace?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Within the organisation we are taking very seriously in the wider context the issues around bullying and harassment. If one looks at ... it is a more general response, this one. The way we can determine that we have started improving matters is that an organisation did a survey 2 to 3 years ago, which was, frankly, fairly shocking in terms of the culture of the organisation; that same organisation, so it is the same comparability has come back. Although we still have further to go we have made significant improvement in those last 2 years. Let us be clear, in terms of that sort of behaviour within the organisation, it is not tolerated.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. The final question to Edith Brown.

3.18 Miss E. Brown of Hautlieu:

What are you doing to ensure that all the teachers with different backgrounds have equal fairness in regard to qualifications, such as G.C.S.E.s (General Certificate of Secondary Education)?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I am not entirely sure I understand the question. As far as I am aware, essentially, everybody has an equal right, subject to recommendations within the schools, to take the G.C.S.E.s that they can take. Obviously within the Government Plan we have put a significant sum of money into what we call the Education Reform Programme and that is about things that we have already done, including the pupil premium and all sorts of other measures, which, I suspect, time does not permit me to go into, to again keep improving the educational system that we have.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you and thank you, Chief Minister.

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I will just thank those who have asked me the questions because that has been quite a challenging round. I will just say you look like you are enjoying my experience far too much.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Very much. Thank you, Chief Minister. That brings question time to an end. On behalf of Members of the Youth Assembly, could I thank the Chief Minister and his colleagues from the Council of Ministers for joining us this afternoon? All the Ministers are very busy people but they have been keen to learn and understand and answer your questions. In turn, it has highlighted to them the issues and concerns which are important to you. They can, I am sure, be left with absolutely no doubt about what you think after that excellent question time this afternoon.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

4. Whether G.C.S.E.s should be scrapped and replaced with a more well-rounded academic and vocational educational system that provides fairer opportunities for all

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

We are now going to move swiftly on to public business because that was a very lively question time. We are going to try and earmark 15 minutes for each proposition. The proposer will make their proposition, it will be seconded, the debate will follow and then the proposer can sum up at the end. But I will keep an eye on the clock, just to ensure that we can try and keep to that, otherwise we will still be debating here until midnight, not unknown but we will try and finish for 5.30 p.m. I would now like to call upon the first speaker and he is asking the Assembly to scrap G.C.S.E.s and replace them with a fairer system. Kenan Bryan from De La Salle, I would like to ask you to propose but, first of all, the Greffier is going to read your proposition.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The Assembly is asked whether it is of opinion that G.C.S.E.s should be scrapped and replaced with a more well-rounded academic and vocational educational system that provides fairer opportunities for all.

4.1 Mr. K. Bryan:

G.C.S.E.s should be scrapped and be replaced by a mix of academic and vocational subjects. We need an education system which is designed to give young people a much broader range of skills to help them enter the world of work: "Another year wasted of education" one student stated. COVID has shown we do not need the G.C.S.E. scheme to ensure students leave with a qualification. As the last 2 years have proven, parents and students trust teachers to decide their grade through evidence from class work, homework and other academic pieces. What is our current G.C.S.E. scheme providing students? We would argue it provides misleading grades, stress, anxiety and makes the last 12 years of education pointless. According to 82 per cent of teachers, tests and exams have the biggest impact on people's mental health. With our current mental health epidemic the Government should not make anyone do anything like this that is detrimental to their mental health. Why carry on a scheme that was introduced by a Government in the 1980s, which is now outdated, to keep causing young people's mental health to rapidly decline? G.C.S.E.s are mainly based on one day and one performance which could be impacted by several factors: how good your memory is, how well you slept and if you ate a nutritious breakfast. This is not a meritocratic system that the Government is striving for and in fact is far from. Students who do not succeed academically are often relegated to lower sets and generally dismissed. These underachievers are only labelled less capable, as they do not suit our current system and it favours the more academic students. The underachievers cannot apply themselves, as they are unable to work with what is being forced upon them. Those who are more academically inclined may not be able to see why their fellow students are falling short and so go along with the narrative set by education that those underachievers are simply not smart enough to do well. At secondary school the subjects prominent in G.C.S.E.s are so narrow in abilities they need an opportunity to do well.

[16:15]

Those who are practically minded do not get to apply their abilities and so underperform. Although we do have subjects like art and D.T. (design and technology), the reality is that these mere 2 subjects are not treated as equals to the big 3: English, maths and science. Grades are determined by one situation and why should outside factors affect educational attainment. Just look at the education systems of the countries like China and Hong Kong, children being forced to go to extra classes and revise until the early hours of the morning. This is because there is increased competitiveness within the education environment with generations getting smarter so others have to make sure that they are the best when it comes to the final exam and final opportunity. We are not stating that this competitive environment that has formed is bad but it should not be a defining factor on young people's final grades. For example, how long until our grades become worthless? As shown by the recent change in the G.C.S.E. scheme, an A was no longer an A. Now students who believed they were working on an A* standard are given an 8, making them believe they are a failure or have underachieved. Changing our system is not a bad thing. The system is currently stagnant and not moving with the times. Let us not be afraid of change and make it better. We need to remember Jersey is unique and we have our own Government and are an independent entity. Young people are angry and they have every right to be. "At 16 years old, the stress, anxiety and pressure in our current educational climate is now manifesting itself into an adolescent molten rage", states one young person, and this is true. Young people have no drive to do well in education as from the start they are already fighting a losing battle. We can make the changes. We need to put children first, like the Government are persistently stating, and provide our young people with a better system and resources to give them the best chance in life. But G.C.S.E.s cannot just be scrapped in the Island and that be the end of it. We need an improved education system on the Island to help our young people. Therefore, we must look to other countries to see what they are doing and the successes they are enjoying alongside their systems. I must stress that when we suggest scrapping G.C.S.E.s in favour of a different system, we are not suggesting Jersey should stumble about with no reference to work with. The education system we are currently employing is one of many. Why should we not look to these other systems to see how they work and how we can use aspects of them through our circumstances? Fantastic examples of these are those of the likes of Sweden and America. I will now pass to my seconder, Mr. Willis, to outline these systems.

4.1.1 Mr. S. Willis of De La Salle College:

Thank you, Mr. Bryan. I shall start off now with America and then move on to Sweden. The American educational system uses a 4.0 average. This system uses points that are gathered from completing a range of different assignments and tasks, resulting in a percentage that is linked to the 4.0 marker. The results given are based off these percentages. Unlike with G.C.S.E.s, students are given numerous opportunities to prove themselves, which is vital for a fair judgment on their individual abilities. The Swedish system starts with preschool with children ages one to 5. Each child's attendance is subsidised based on the situation of their parents, if the parents are working or unemployed, for example. Preschool emphasises the development of young minds and giving them all an equal start. Next is compulsory school. Grades gathered during this period will allow students to go on to upper secondary school or go directly into the world of work. Unlike G.C.S.E.s, the results are not final and students are given opportunities to still attend upper secondary school if they improve upon the subjects that they failed in. Finally, there is the aforementioned upper secondary school, which provides 18 national programmes, 6 being in preparation for higher education and the other 12 being vocational. Students only begin to specialise at this point after they have had a wide range of subjects to interact with during compulsory school. As you can see, this is vastly different from the be-all and end-all of G.C.S.E.s. A very interesting addition on to this is the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education. Along with general preparation for vocational jobs, the agency has a programme of recognition for prior learning, which helps make skills and knowledge visible for employers regardless of how or when or where these skills were learned. This would definitely help immigrants and other older workers who were trained in skills decades ago who are

now not noticed by current employers. The vocational programmes provided by the agency are formed in response to the needs of the economy. Both employers and industry representatives get involved with these programmes, which takes the burden off the state in regards to providing vocational courses. This means that each generation of workers are feeding the economy and not directing themselves into profitless niche markets. Again, this is a far cry from the stagnancy of G.C.S.E.s. Now, I must emphasise that we are not policymakers. We merely suggest that you look to these aforementioned education systems and ask why can we not utilise aspects of them for ourselves to fit the unique circumstances of our Island. Why should we not pull together and forge something new?

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

I would now like to ask any speaker if they would like to make their points. I have got Noah Jervis. Would you like to speak?

4.1.2 Mr. N. Jervis:

Yes, please. I have several objections to the American system. As an International Baccalaureate student myself, I can tell you that spacing assessments out throughout the academic year does not alleviate stress; arguably it does the opposite. The American system also focuses a lot of its qualification on a S.A.T, which is like a C.A.T. (cognitive abilities test) where you would have taken them, and they certainly do not measure any sort of any academic ability or any sort of artistic or vocational talent either.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. In the chat I have got quite a few people asking if they can ask a question. This is not question time. This is debating. We are now debating the proposition. You might have questions that you would like the proposer of the proposition to answer at the end but if you can, build them into the points that you wish to make.

4.1.3 Mr. A. Nixon:

If schools were to rely upon teachers to decide grades and results there may be an abuse of power from some teachers. Decades of research have shown teachers often give unconscious bias evaluations of students' work and this can affect students' future learning. David M. Quinn, who is a professor of education at the University of Southern California, conducted an experiment that found that teachers gave white students better marks across the board in comparison to ethnic students except when teachers used a grading rubric with specific criteria, which the G.C.S.E. exams do, racial bias all but disappeared. When teachers evaluated student writing using a general grade scale, racial bias was considerable, even when considering the same standard of work.

4.1.4 Mr. J. de Costa:

There are many problems with getting rid of G.C.S.E.s but I think the main one is that it may put local students at a disadvantage in comparison to mainland students in regards to applying to universities, more specifically, for those who are aspiring to get into Russell Group universities where G.C.S.E.s are vital in applications. Dr. Tim Hands, who was previously the Master of Magdalen College, Oxford, also disagreed with previous suggestions from some education experts that G.C.S.E.s should be scrapped and replaced with different forms of assessment. He said that G.C.S.E.s are a meaningful and important hurdle and the truth is that G.C.S.E.s are a better and broader set of tests and more meaningful to employers and universities. So how would Mr. Bryan make the system that he is proposing internationally recognised by other countries and universities?

4.1.5 Mr. J. Gurner:

Ultimately, stress and anxiety are prevalent in many important jobs. By giving young people the opportunity to overcome this through challenging examinations, does this not provide an indication of capable students able to meet such demands in the future?

4.1.6 Mr. D. Kayley:

Would the system that you are proposing not just increase further division between those who pursue the academic part and the vocational part, since there would have to be some form of selection at 11, for example? As well as this, I want to emphasise the point made by Mr. Jervis that the American system is not all class based. They have standardised assessments that aim to equalise the different grading systems used in different schools and these tests carry a lot of weight in university admissions.

4.1.7 Miss E. Rodrigues:

Although I agree with the point made by Kenan Bryan of De La Salle School, it is an English institution and therefore the Jersey Government do not have a choice of the education system. Furthermore, the U.K. Government most likely would not agree with the proposition.

4.1.8 Miss A. Hammond:

In relation to the university applications, G.C.S.E. results are looked at, so without these results are we expected to suffer and hinder potential?

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Does any other Member wish to speak? Very well, if no one else would like to speak, I would like to call upon the proposer, Mr. Bryan, to respond.

4.1.9 Mr. K. Bryan:

Hearing the responses from many of the different people on the call brings up good debate. For the I.B. (International Baccalaureate) students, I would stress the statistics that were released last year: 22.5 per cent of females felt extremely test anxious, that being followed with 10.3 per cent of males. By spreading exams over a few years and not just relying on a 4-week period to complete 2 or 3 examinations reduces that stress as they know that if they fail to achieve to their best standard in the first place there are more opportunities to do so. Local students will not be at a disadvantage when having to go to universities if we change our system. Wales, Scotland, America, *et cetera*, are all still able to enter universities in the United Kingdom. But I would like to stress, like Mr. Willis stated before, we are not policymakers and we have not been able to sit down for months on end and develop any sort of policy to put through today. In terms of division, you do not specify into vocational and academic subjects at the age of 11. What our system is proposing to do is allow students when they get to a more mature age to decide what route they want to go down. Academics is not always for all. People need to be given the opportunity to specialise into vocational subjects at an earlier age than 16. We propose this could be around 14. Jersey can vote in for a different education system. We are an independent entity with an independent government. The Government need to realise that we need a better education system to provide young people with the best opportunity for them heading on into their later lives.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. We are now going to have a vote and in a moment the Greffier is going to put a vote in the chat channel, so we are going to see how that goes. There were a few teething issues yesterday when we had a practice run. The vote is in the chat channel at the moment, so if everyone would like to cast their vote. I do not think the vote is working. We did suspect this might be the case, so we are going to go back to the very old fashioned system that some of us still remember. It is like a roll call, so the Deputy Greffier is going to call each of your names and you will have to record your vote

verbally, either *pour*, *contre* or abstain, and then they will be counted up and we will announce them shortly afterwards.

[16:30]

Thank you. I would like to announce that the proposition has been lost: 10 votes *pour*, 26 *contre* and 2 abstentions.

POUR: 10		CONTRE: 26		ABSTAIN: 2
Kenan Bryan		Chloe Connor		Matilda Garood
Ben Hafey		Josephine Peel		Naomi Balderson
Samuel Willis		Ellie Daniel		
Noah Jervis		Ruby Clarke		
Edith Brown		Anna Endelenbos		
Diana Casegas		Ruby Filleul		
Jennifer Rodrigues		Olivia Kawala		
Jordan Black		Moses Sappé		
Emily Rodrigues		Henry Devenport		
Cole Graham		Archie Willets		
		Max Firby		
		George Dowling		
		Jem Gurner		
		Darius Kayley		
		Ralph Amos		
		Jason Da Costa		
		Axel Nixon		
		Claire Le Fondré		
		Jude Anquetil		
		Lilian O'Neill		
		Amelie Byrne		
		Alex Hamon		
		Katie Bishop		
		Bridget Le Brocq		
		Katie Le Saint		
		Eleanor Bayley		

5. Whether to legalise all recreational drugs in Jersey

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

We would now like to move to the next item on the agenda, which is whether to legalise all recreational drugs in Jersey. So the next item is a proposition from Henry Devenport of Victoria College and I ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The Assembly is asked whether it is of opinion that all recreational drugs should be legalised in Jersey.

5.1 Mr. H. Devenport:

Good afternoon. I will be reading Victoria College's proposition. Our proposition to the States is the legalisation of all drugs, with their distribution being entirely controlled and regulated by the Government. While the legalisation of drugs may initially appear an extremely dangerous policy, further analysis shows it would not be as radical as many assume. It is evident the current system in

place is ineffective at combatting drug use. A Government report published in 2015 estimated 1.4 per cent of Jersey's population aged 15 to 64 are problem drug users. Other countries such as Portugal and the Netherlands, who have a liberal policy on drugs, have seen a decline in their use in the last decade while drug use in Jersey has remained stagnant, a continuous problem that evidently will not be leaving our society any time soon. The ultimate goal of any drug policy is to reduce their consumption. While it may seem counterintuitive that legalising drugs would do this, there is evidence to suggest in fact it would. The legalisation of drugs, with them produced and distributed by the Government, would restrict the supply available to individuals. While some may argue they would still turn to the black market to acquire further drugs, this would prove not to be economically viable for the drug buyer nor seller. A Government monopoly on drugs would mean full control of the prices at which the drugs are sold. This means that the Government can easily undercut dealers who ultimately pay high sums for the risk they take in breaking the law to sell their products, such as packaging and smuggling costs. To quote Detective Sergeant McGranahan, because we are an Island there are challenges with getting the drugs in. That, together with the fact that the risks are massive if you get caught, drives up the street price. As the Government do not have to pay any money towards the illegitimate means of production and distribution, nor do they need extra financial incentives to alleviate the risks, reward and balance if they provided the drugs illegally, that would decrease the production cost and consequently cause a reduction in the prices of drugs sold. Due to money nearly always being the limiting factor in what prevents a problem drug user from acquiring any further substances, this would successfully drive drug dealers out of business as many drug users would turn to the Government. The outcome of this would be that police resources would no longer be concentrated on bringing them to justice as they either would relocate or stop their production and smuggling of drugs entirely, thus successfully eliminating the current drug problem our Island faces. Drug dealers have no regulations binding them to have sanitary requirements or safe ingredients. They prioritise their income over the health of their customers, often cutting the pure drug created with other substances to help create high yields from each successful batch made and grown. An infamous example of this is cocaine, this being due to its high street price with dealers distributing pure cocaine mixed with cutting agents allowing the sellers to maximise the units sold. Laundry detergent, laxatives, boric acid and local anaesthetics like procaine are some of the common cutting agents within cocaine, these agents being some of the safer ones used. This creates a lucky dip scenario where drug users have no idea of the composition of what they are taking due to both not being fully told and the dealers not adhering to any standardised health guidelines, which obviously is incredibly dangerous. In the 2015 Jersey Drug Report authored by the Centre for Drug Misuse Research, 47 per cent of ever-takers reported having snorted or injected an unknown powder on at least one occasion in the past. Through allowing the production of drugs to be run through only the States, this problem would be averted. The sometimes fatal cutting agents would be cut out of the manufacturing process of drugs, reducing fatalities and health risks that come with taking them. Guidelines can be set in place to remove any fatal components present and the area in which the drugs are produced would also obviously have to follow the same guidelines as other businesses in regard to working conditions and safety regulations, reducing the risk of drug contamination in combination with the exploitation of workers who are often caught up within the process. The legalisation of drugs could also eliminate other health risks, due to the illegal nature of drugs, meaning they are consumed in secret and often unsafely. A government centre where drug users could be administered with sterile and correct equipment to take drugs, such as needles, would reduce the spread of diseases such as H.I.V. (human immunodeficiency virus) and ensure medical care would be immediately available should it be required. Government programmes could work with drug users to gradually prevent them from using the damaging substances. Drug users are afraid to search for help through fear of being arrested for their habit. With many problem drug users often not having a proper support network around them, they often sadly turn to drugs as their coping mechanism. In a legalised system this exponential cycle would be removed through drug users receiving the help of care workers and doctors who understand the effect drugs have on the body and could guide them to recovery.

Recovered drug addicts could then work more productively and boost the local economy. Many would likely be more willing to come forward with their stories, providing support and motivation for other drug users aspiring to follow in their footsteps. For these reasons and more, this is why we believe that the legalisation of drugs would be a successful and pragmatic solution to a persistent problem.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. Is the proposition seconded? [**Seconded**]

5.1.1 Miss B. Le Brocq:

Many people have suffered from the effects of their drinks being spiked at parties and clubs. However, with the legalisation of drugs, this may increase the chances of this happening. This could then put more people in danger of being potentially raped or sexually assaulted.

5.1.2 Miss E. Byrnes:

We believe that the legalisation of drugs increases the workload of our hospital and healthcare workers due to the overuse of drugs because they are easily accessible, in turn costing the taxpayers more due to increased amounts of equipment being used on those suffering side effects of the drugs that have been legalised.

5.1.3 Miss C. Le Fondré:

In your report you state that you are proposing the legalisation of all drugs, including class A drugs, which are considered the most harmful. How can you justify that the Government legalise substances that are highly likely to cause physical harm and in some cases death?

5.1.4 Mr. A. Nixon:

As many people know, there are many negative side effects of taking drugs, such as weakened immune systems, weakened memory and attention span. This will all cause a less productive workforce, which overall is obviously a problem. More people will be incapacitated to fulfil their work, putting strain on healthcare, as was said before, and the economy.

5.1.5 Miss O. Kawala:

You are proposing legalising drugs when health is cited as the main reason for not being legal. Cannabis has been highlighted by the World Health Organisation as being dangerous as it can cause lung cancer and throat cancer. There is also an increase in evidence of mental health problems due to prolonged heavy use in a minority. Making drugs legal and more available will result in more use and so increase the evidence of harmful side effects at great cost to society. Also alcohol is a drug, which is already legal and it is the greatest killer, so I do not understand why we should legalise drugs as well.

5.1.6 Mr. N. Jervis:

While I agree with Mr. Devenport that the war on drugs has been a failure - mass incarceration of drug users turning addicts into criminals is not the way forward; it is, in my opinion, morally wrong - I do not think that having these safe and sanitary conditions is possible with substances that are addictive and cause overdoses and long-term health problems. I would be with the Member if he was proposing decriminalising drugs but I do not think putting drugs in the Government's hands from this proposition would work.

5.1.7 Mr. B. Hathey:

Just reading now, drug-related deaths have increased in places like Scotland from 6 per cent from 2018 being the highest numbers since records began in 1996. Why legalise drugs now when drug-related deaths are on the rise?

[16:45]

5.1.8 Mr. D. Kayley:

I understand that there are many oppositions to this proposition. But do you want to help these people or not? Many drug users have either physical or mental conditions, which must be cured. If drugs were legalised, the States could control the dose for these people and eventually cure them of their addiction. These people need our help. It is a common misconception that legalising drugs would increase their consumption. People who care about their health would not take drugs, whether or not they are legal. Instead, legalising drugs would decrease the income of illegal distributors, thus eliminating the black market. Furthermore, if drugs were made legal, taking them would no longer be seen as cool among the youth and would rather place the youth into a vulnerable category, which I assume that none of them want. The black market, if it still existed, would become economically unviable. No one would flock to the black market when the available drugs are much cheaper. The black market would fade out of existence as shown in countries such as Portugal and the Netherlands, in which many illegal drugs have been legalised with only positive circumstances. I understand your concerns. I myself was sceptical of this proposal at first. But, upon reading about the success of similar initiatives in other countries, I have become persuaded of the merits of this proposal. Even the psychological positive impacts of current drug victims, because they are victims of drugs, must be taken into account. We must help them as we help other victims. Sending drug users, victims of their own actions, to prison is futile and does not help them at all. It costs roughly £37,000 per year to keep someone imprisoned in the U.K. In Jersey, this figure lies at £77,000. Would this money not be better used in rehabilitation initiatives? In fact, the money that the Government saves from this proposition would make money available for subsidies for more carbon-neutral transport, increase spending on mental health services, and even period products for girls. A Government-provided drugs initiative with limited doses per person and controlled supply would probably be cheaper than sending drug users and dealers to prison. The healthcare system would not suffer because more people would not take drugs. I hope that you consider this proposal seriously. Thank you.

5.1.9 Miss E. Rodrigues:

Although it would be beneficial for the economy, there are severe consequences for the mistreatment of drugs, such as death, and certain severe effects on the brain that can negatively affect students in their future, such as in exams. If misused, severe side-effects occur to students. This can limit their chances of success further in life. Furthermore, you cannot help people, regardless of their mental health, if they are dead.

5.1.10 Miss E. Bailey:

What will you do to stop people mixing the drugs, which could have unknown side-effects, making them unsafe and potentially risking people's lives?

5.1.11 Mr. J. de Costa:

Regular drug use has also been proven to cause abnormal aggression in people. Although legalising drug use can reduce drug-related crimes, do you not think that there will be an increase in other forms of crime, such as an increase in street fighting, which can put increased pressure on the police workforce?

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

If no other Members wish to speak, I would like to call on Mr. Devenport to respond.

5.1.12 Mr. M. Sappé:

I am Moses. I will be filling in for Henry Devenport. All of the problems just mentioned exist outside of drugs being legalised. By legalising them, we are able to help mitigate and control these

problems, more so than if we just let them run rampant. The Government in no way encourages drug use, but discourages it in a similar way to smoking. You may say that problem still exists. But it would be done so in a way entirely States-owned without the privatisation of companies. It would help reduce the negative impacts and ultimately help rehabilitate and re-educate people on the issue of drugs.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you very much. We are now going to have the vote. We are not going to try the electronic vote again and we are going to go straight to the roll call. If you can be prepared at the microphone so when the Greffier calls your name you can respond, *pour*, *contre* or abstain. That was a very narrow defeat: 16 votes *pour*, 17 *contre*, and 5 abstentions.

POUR: 16	CONTRE: 17	ABSTAIN: 5
Matilda Garood	Chloe Connor	Josephine Peel
Moses Sappé	Ellie Daniel	Naomi Balderson
Henry Devenport	Ruby Clarke	Kenan Bryan
Archie Willets	Anna Endelenbos	Jude Anquetil
Max Firby	Ruby Filleul	Katie Bishop
George Dowling	Olivia Kawala	
Jem Gurner	Ben Hafey	
Darius Kayley	Claire Le Fondré	
Ralph Amos	Lilian O'Neill	
Samuel Willis	Amelie Byrne	
Jason Da Costa	Alex Hamon	
Axel Nixon	Bridget Le Brocq	
Edith Brown	Katie Le Saint	
Diana Casegas	Eleanor Bayley	
Jordan Black	Noah Jervis	
Cole Graham	Jennifer Rodrigues	
	Emily Rodrigues	

6. Whether Jersey should follow Scotland and make period products freely available for all

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

We now turn to the next item, which is asking if we should follow Scotland and make period products freely available. That is a proposition from Ruby Filleul of Jersey College for Girls and I ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The Assembly is asked whether it is of opinion that Jersey should follow Scotland and make period products freely available for all.

6.1 Miss R. Filleul of Jersey College for Girls:

I am not going to stand here and spit facts at you because I believe that our proposal has proved that period poverty is a serious issue, not only in the wider world, but in Jersey as well. We live in the western world in the 21st century so I ask you, why is it that we are still here debating whether we should help women living in poverty to access period products. Period poverty is known to lead to various mental health issues, reproductive issues and infections due to unhygienic replacements, women missing work and school, both of which will affect their income. Enforcing an oppressive stigma, which surrounds periods globally. Also, being, put plainly, degrading and embarrassing. I for one do not believe that we should allow this to continue to exist in our Island. Firstly, I would

like to clarify something. Just because period products are free for all does not mean that everyone will use them. I have already mentioned the stigma surrounding periods, which remains pervasive on our Island. It simply stands to reason that, because of this, people who do not need these products will not choose to access them unless absolutely necessary. Access to menstrual products is not something that should be debated. We do not choose to have our periods. If it was a choice, then I guarantee you that periods would no longer exist. I think that we have already established that the money is already there to solve this issue. It just is not being funnelled into the right places. This is the right place. It should be a right for all women across the world to access sanitary products. But, to start with, we need to make that the case here in Jersey. If the Government failed to respond to this issue, not only will they be ignoring their objective to put children first, but failing half of the population of this Island. So I ask you to prove this to them by voting to follow Scotland and make period products freely available for everyone. Thank you.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you, Miss Filleul. Do I have a seconder for the proposition? **[Seconded]**

6.1.1 Female Speaker:

Yes. As Miss Filleul previously stated, periods are not a choice. As women, we cannot consciously control whether we get them each month. Therefore, the law should reflect this. Because, while we cannot choose whether to have periods, far too many women have to forego buying sanitary products to cover costs for their family. According to the “Our Life in Numbers” statistics, 29 per cent of families are earning relatively low income. Meaning poverty is a huge concern in Jersey. If women are unable to afford basic essentials for their families, such as food, then they will often stop buying sanitary towels, meaning they have to find unhygienic, uncomfortable, substitutes for these, such as socks or newspaper. This should not be a reality that women have to face. Period poverty is something we can tackle. We asked earlier whether the States Members have free parking. The reply was that 45 States Members receive free parking anywhere in St. Helier. Driving to work is a choice. Periods are not. Why should these States Members, who also receive a salary for their work, receive free parking spaces if poverty is so prevalent in our society? We do not need higher taxes but a better redistribution of the tax revenue to where it is most needed. Women should not have to wait any longer. If we want to move towards a more equitable society, we have to put the plans in place to make sustainable change for all, which means we have to make sanitary products freely available. Period products are not a luxury; they are a need. We should follow Scotland and make sanitary products free for all.

6.1.2 Mr. J. Gurner:

Ultimately, we agree period products are a necessity. However, this does not automatically mean they should be free. There are many other necessities, such as food, water and housing, where there is support for those who cannot afford them, but those who can are expected to pay. Why should period products be any different?

6.1.3 Miss O. Kawala:

With average periods lasting about 5 days, it can cost up to £8 a month for period products, which some women struggle to afford. In the U.K., it is estimated that currently 137,000 children have missed a day of school due to period poverty. However, if we give out free condoms at services for people who need it, then why can we not do the same for sanitary products?

6.1.4 Miss C. Connor:

If we are giving men and women in poverty the same food, housing and healthcare, why are we not permitting women to have free sanitary products when it is a basic need? That is like me taking away a man’s breakfast. Thank you.

[17:00]

6.1.5 Mr. N. Jervis:

Just in response to Mr. Gurner's objection to the proposal. I would like to argue that food, water and housing, should all be made available for anyone.

6.1.6 Mr. A. Nixon:

Toilet paper is not free for men but it is a biological necessity, which you still have to buy. I understand that men do not go through periods and women having to purchase expensive products, which are classed as luxury items, is unfair. If women can afford these luxury products then they should pay for them, but if women cannot afford these products then they should not have to pay for them because it is unfair. In a global context, working in Johnson and Johnson factories, there are many women of colour who are paid £8.50 a day because it is the cheapest method of production. If Governments were to provide these products, it would mean that they would be paid a cheaper price. With schemes like the Red Box project, women who cannot afford these products are getting help and there should be more support for not only women, but women who cannot afford them.

6.1.7 Miss J. Anketiel:

The Governments still have to produce money to make sanitary products. This could raise tax for the general public and mean people suffering from period poverty will technically be paying for their sanitary products anyway. Proposing a scheme in which tax paid on sanitary products is given to women's charities may be a more efficient and meaningful use of money.

6.1.8 Miss O. Kawala:

In regards to what Mr. Nixon said, the Red Box scheme is not widely recognised across Jersey and at this moment in time it is only held in schools.

6.1.9 Mr. K. Bryan:

After the recent pandemic, our Government has spent millions into the billions on helping and supporting our community. Where will this money come from? We cannot be cutting spending on things like health, *et cetera*, and we cannot be raising taxes after thousands find themselves on lower wages or out of jobs. Nothing is ever free. It must be paid for by someone. This, although it is necessary, falls at the wrong time.

6.1.10 Miss K. Bishop:

To make this work, taxes would either have to rise or taken away from other things. So, how would you determine that this is more important than other areas that the Government spend their money on?

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

If there are no other Members who wish to speak, I would like to call on Miss Filleul to respond.

6.1.11 Miss R. Filleul:

Ultimately, this issue is just all about choices, about how you spend your money. I would like to remind everyone here that Scotland per capita is poorer than Jersey is and they have been able to afford this scheme without any troubles at all. Women do not choose to have periods. I know that all of you know this. But I do not know whether all of you understand. This happens every month, whether we want it to or not. If you are faced with the choice between putting dinner on the table for your family or buying period products, you are never going to choose the latter. You cannot expect women to be able to go to work, to go to school, to be a part of society, if at this time they are bleeding and not able to stop it. Ultimately, this should not be something that is debated. This is something

that all women should have a right to access. So I ask you all to vote to make period products free for everybody.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. We will now go to the vote. So again the Greffier will be calling your name for you to respond. The debate has been accepted, it has been approved: 23 votes *pour*, 7 *contre*, and 8 abstentions.

POUR: 23	CONTRE: 7	ABSTAIN: 8
Chloe Connor	Max Firby	Naomi Balderson
Josephine Peel	George Dowling	Moses Sappé
Ellie Daniel	Jem Gurner	Henry Devenport
Ruby Clarke	Kenan Bryan	Archie Willets
Anna Endelenbos	Ben Hafey	Darius Kayley
Ruby Filleul	Jason Da Costa	Samuel Willis
Matilda Garood	Axel Nixon	Claire Le Fondré
Olivia Kawala		Katie Bishop
Ralph Amos		
Jude Anquetil		
Lilian O'Neill		
Amelie Byrne		
Alex Hamon		
Bridget Le Brocq		
Katie Le Saint		
Eleanor Bayley		
Noah Jervis		
Edith Brown		
Diana Casegas		
Jennifer Rodrigues		
Jordan Black		
Emily Rodrigues		
Cole Graham		

7. Support people getting on the property ladder

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

We now turn to the next proposition, which is a proposition to support people getting on the property ladder from Noah Jervis for Hautlieu. I would like to ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The Assembly is asked whether it is of opinion that there should be more financial support offered to help people get on the property ladder in Jersey and house prices should be capped.

7.1 Mr. N. Jervis:

Housing is an essential right. Every man, woman and child, needs a house. Yet our hardest-working individuals who find themselves the lowest paid are unable to even consider the possibility of owning a home in Jersey. This is due to several factors, low wages, high rent, and most importantly our extortionate house prices. The very builders who build our Island’s key housing cannot afford to live in it themselves. It is beyond ridiculous. How the mean price for a family home, a mere 3-bed property, over the past decade has increased from an already absurd £512,000 to an even more preposterous £671,000. No wtell me this. The average wage for an adult in Jersey is £44,000, which comes to just over £3,500 a month and they are still expected to raise their children, buy their essentials, pay a ludicrous rent and still save up for a house. How is it fair that when people who

work the hardest in our community cannot afford one house? Yet those in the top of society who can afford multiple homes profit from those at the bottom. I just want to drive that point in. Those who work the hardest are forced to pay an extortionate tax on living to landlords who do very little work at all. At the end of a lease, after paying thousands or even hundreds of thousands of pounds, they receive absolutely nothing. Jersey's wealth divide is already staggering. Unless action is taken, it will continue to grow, which in itself is a problem. Meaningful housing reforms have been continually voted down by the States Assembly as its Members try to protect themselves rather than the people they were elected to protect. We propose that house prices are capped and those in the working and middle classes are given greater support to finally be able to get on the property ladder, to finally combat this devastating social evil.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]**

7.1.1 Miss E. Brown:

Yes, I am seconding it. Beyond that, how could we ever expect our Islanders to step on to the property ladder when rents are prohibitively expensive? The higher the rents, the less money people have to save for a deposit in order to enable them to buy. For example, while house prices increased by 7 per cent in 2018 and 2019, which is appalling, private sector rents rose by 9 per cent in 2018, which is unsustainable and prices out ordinary people from being able to afford nice homes that fulfil their needs. Reasonable rents and mortgages are paramount during such a time of crisis. How can we expect people to pay exorbitant rents while they are unemployed or have a reduced income? Moreover, rent caps are not unprecedented. In 2020 for over 5 months rent rises, in any circumstances, were banned as part of the pandemic economic support measures. We believe that this should be continued and extended to house prices. How would you feel living under a looming threat of being evicted? We as a society should try our hardest to prevent homelessness and people living in unfit conditions. Therefore, as we move forward, we believe that house price and rent cap is the fairest way to accomplish this.

7.1.2 Miss K. Le Saint:

How would you decide what houses fall into what sector? For example, even though 2 houses could both be 4 bedrooms, the size of those bedrooms could be massively different. Or one could have an entirely different garden space or be detached. Also, houses can be of equal area but one can be extremely outdated and therefore needs money spent on it. They are usually priced cheaper.

7.1.3 Miss E. Bailey:

A way to resolve this could be that Trinity, for example, have an estate for first-time buyers only where they pay some of the rent and then the Government subsidised the rest. This might be a better idea to build more places like this in more parishes instead of sectoring houses or building more flats, which cannot be accommodating families.

[17:15]

7.1.4 Mr. J. Gurner:

Capping house prices will result in a negative wealth effect, meaning households are less inclined to spend on consumption of goods and services in our economy. This reduction in demand will be to the detriment of local businesses. How would this issue be combatted?

7.1.5 Mr. M. Sappé:

Many households are currently in the process of paying off mortgages. By capping house prices, they will end up paying a mortgage greater than the value they can sell the house. Is this not a concern?

7.1.6 Mr. A. Nixon:

Through the Government setting a cap on house prices, as Mr. Gurner was saying before, it would interfere with market forces of supply and demand and thus an equilibrium within the market would not be reached. That is all I have to say about that.

7.1.7 Mr. D. Kayley:

A house is worth whatever someone is willing to pay for it. By capping house prices we are effectively removing this sort of decision-making ability from sellers as to how much they value their home and for how much they wish to sell it. Is this fair in our society?

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Does any other Member wish to speak? If not, I would like to call on Mr. Jervis to respond.

7.1.8 Mr. N. Jervis:

I think you have made some valid points. Obviously, houses do have different values, but for me the greatest value is having people who are born in Jersey, work in Jersey, go to school in Jersey, and are assets to our community, have somewhere to live. Whether that be somewhere with however much space they need. That is not the system we have at the moment. The system we have at the moment only accommodates the people who are willing to profit off it. At the moment if you are on a lease, if you are paying rent, you are giving money to people who are hoarding these houses and they are going to buy more houses. It is a broken system. It is a mess. Despite your very valid concerns, I think we need to look past the loss of money that will be coming from these people who can very well afford it, only to look to the people who are the lowest in society who need a house in order to survive. Thank you.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. We will now take the vote and the Greffier will be calling the roll call when she is ready to go.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

We had a message in the chat to say that J.C.G. (Jersey College for Girls) were unfortunately having to vacate their school building. So I am still going to call their names for the vote but if they do not answer then we know the reason why.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

That past debate on house prices should be capped is a tied vote, so 12 *pour*, 12 *contre*, and 5 abstentions. In the case of a tied vote, what normally happens is the status quo prevails. So, if this proposition is proposing something new, like capping house prices, it would fall.

POUR: 12	CONTRE: 12	ABSTAIN: 5
Ralph Amos	Moses Sappé	Lilian O’Neill
Kenan Bryan	Henry Devenport	Amelie Byrne
Ben Hafey	Archie Willets	Alex Hamon
Samuel Willis	Max Firby	Katie Bishop
Axel Nixon	George Dowling	Bridget Le Brocq
Noah Jervis	Jem Gurner	
Edith Brown	Darius Kayley	
Diana Casegas	Jason Da Costa	
Jennifer Rodrigues	Claire Le Fondré	
Jordan Black	Jude Anquetil	
Emily Rodrigues	Katie Le Saint	
Cole Graham	Eleanor Bayley	

8. Whether women should be paid more than male colleagues for the same job

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

We now turn to the final item of the afternoon, the final proposition that asks whether women should be paid more than male colleagues for the same job. It is a proposition brought forward by Claire Le Fondré of Beaulieu. I ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The Assembly is asked whether it is of opinion that all women in Jersey should be paid 18.3 per cent more than male colleagues doing the same job, to compensate for the gender pay gap, which has historically favoured men and still exists in Jersey today.

8.1 Miss C. Le Fondré:

It is a well-known fact that for thousands of years throughout the entirety of history women have been unfairly discriminated against in almost every single aspect of life. Issues such as the gender pay gap have been talked about and publicised for several decades and yet very little progress has been made in achieving financial equality and equal pay. Subsequently, we are proposing that to compensate for the thousands of years of discrimination, not only in the workplace but socially, domestically and politically to name a few, that for the next 60-odd years women are paid around 18 per cent more than men for doing the same job with the same amount of experience. Essentially, we are reversing the gender pay gap, so women will now be paid an extra 18 per cent more than men. Throughout history, society has always been inherently patriarchal and misogynistic. For once, we believe women should be given the opportunity to have the upper hand as well as allowing men to realise what it feels like to have all the odds stacked against you. Some of you may be questioning why we feel so strongly about the gender pay gap and why we are proposing such a radical proposition. Let me put things into perspective for you. The current pay gap in the Government of Jersey that affects all members of the civil service is 18.3 per cent. Some of you may consider this to not be a significant difference. However, long term, this is not the case. As a result of the pay gap, women are significantly more susceptible to falling into poverty with 22 per cent of women over the age of 65, compared to 16 per cent of men, largely as a result of the difference in income rates, which causes their pensions to suffer. For instance, if a man makes £50,000 a year, a woman doing the same job will make around £41,000, £9,000 less. Over the course of 10 years, if the pay rates do not change, the man will have made in total £500,000 compared to the women who have made £410,000. Almost £100,000 less for no justifiable or significant reason why. The average number of years that a person will be actively working for is around 45 years. Meaning that, based off of this number and using the same figures as before a woman will have made £405,000 less than her male colleagues who do the same job and share the same amount of experience in this role. Of course these numbers are largely generalised and do not take into account promotions or pay increases among other things. However, hopefully, this will show you the reality of the long-term effects that the gender pay gap has on women and we hope this will help you understand why we feel so strongly about this topic. The reversal of the pay gap will not only help to make up for the hundreds of thousands of pounds lost by women as a result of the pay gap, but it will also serve as general compensation for the thousands of years of discrimination faced by women throughout history. Ma'am, I make the proposition.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]**

8.1.1 Miss. K. Bishop:

I understand that many of you, especially the boys listening, will think our proposal is unfair and frankly it is. We acknowledge and understand this does not seem like a step towards equality but it ultimately supplies justice for women and will provide gender equality in the long term. We are suggesting 60 years of increased pay towards women and decreased pay towards men. Yes, this is a long time, but it is roughly the amount of time women have been discriminated against pay-wise in Jersey. Initially, the pay gap was significantly higher than the current 18.3 per cent. Therefore, we feel this is reasonable and almost still unequal towards women. We hope that the thought of experiencing this prejudice against yourselves has given you an insight into what women have been facing and allowed you to take into account the feelings of women when deciding your vote today.

8.1.2 Mr. J. Gurner:

It is clear there is an underrepresentation of women in top positions. By making women more expensive to hire than men, will employers not have an incentive to employ men, compounding the issue of women's underrepresentation?

8.1.3 Mr. A. Nixon:

Your entire argument is flawed. As per 2013, there has been a law, which is the Discrimination (Jersey) Law 2013, and that has said that men and women in the same job cannot be paid differently. I challenge you to name one job where women get paid less than men in the same exact position. Would a female C.E.O. (Chief Executive Officer) make less money than a male C.E.O.? I think not.

8.1.3 Mr. R. Amos:

I completely understand the wish to address the gender pay gap. It is a serious issue and we should try to fix it but what you are suggesting sounds to me more like reparations than a way to combat the issue. You cannot solve the gender pay gap by paying women more than men. That only serves, I feel, to legitimise different pay for different genders by putting it into law.

8.1.4 Mr. H. Devenport:

How can you reasonably justify paying people doing the same thing different amounts? That is just the opposite of equality. You might be striving for equality but in the process of striving for it you have destroyed it.

8.1.5 Mr. B. Hafey:

As I said just before, there is no equality in this system and men of today should not have to suffer as a result of actions and rules set by men years ago. We should not have to suffer. Although I do agree that there should be equal pay for the same job, men should not have to suffer nowadays.

[17:30]

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Does anybody else wish to speak?

8.1.6 Male Speaker:

I will. Though I understand that the progress towards achieving equality is still too far away, I do not argue that the equilibrium we have made so much progress towards to achieve in the last century would be completely and utterly undermined by this.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Does anybody else wish to speak? I apologise if I have missed any of you because of my chat. Jason de Costa, is that you on Axel Nixon's?

8.1.7 Mr. J. de Costa:

Yes, it is, yes. So I think there has been a misunderstanding on the Beaulieu part. According to the summary of the Jersey Gender Pay Gap report, it states that the gender pay gap shows the difference between the average earnings of men and women. It is not a measure of the difference in pay between men and women doing the same job. So men are not being paid more than women doing the same job because statistically men go into industries with a higher pay. For example, the report also states that 65 per cent of doctors are men. So the issue does not lie with gender discrimination, it lies with women typically going into professions that pay less.

8.1.8 Miss E. Bailey:

Firstly, I would just like to say that it is not becoming unequal as it is already unequal now. It is just role-reversal, which just so happens to benefit not in your favour. However, you are saying that women are not going for these higher-paying jobs. We are but we are more unlikely to get hired for these roles due to us being questioned for maternity reasons or family goals, which is unfair in itself. So this is just one way that we could step up our equality. It is not being unequal to be equal. It is staying the same inequality to eventually reach the equality that we deserve.

8.1.9 Miss E. Byrne:

I just wanted to back up on this point and say that you are not losing any money. You will not earn any less than what you would have done. It is the women who will earn more. So you are not losing out on anything. You are not getting any less money than you would have done if this had not have happened. If it does, the women are just filling the gap of what they have lost.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Henry Devenport, you have put a question mark, is that because you are waiting to speak?

8.1.10 Mr. H. Devenport:

Yes, it is. I would like to say that I find it incredibly ironic that in your report you state a quote by John Le Fondré that one of the Government's aims is to be a good and fair employer. While the proposition you are proposing is in reality incredibly unfair and quite frankly misogynistic.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Katie, are you asking to speak?

Miss K. Bishop:

Yes, please.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Did you second the proposal?

Miss K. Bishop:

Yes.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

So you cannot speak again. Darius Kayley.

8.1.11 Mr. D. Kayley:

Following on from the point made that men would not earn less. If men do not earn less then where would the money come from to pay for higher women's salaries? I also want to emphasise the point made by Mr. Gurner that if there is a statutory requirement for employers to pay women more, what will be the motivation to employ them?

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Does any other Member wish to speak? No, in that case I will call upon Miss Le Fondré to respond.

8.1.12 Miss C. Le Fondré:

It has been an interesting debate and I thank those who have contributed. I really feel like addressing the points raised. The way this would be paid would be, not only companies making more profit, there is an increase in profit, so maybe there might be some cut in the men’s pay but it will not be a significant cut to the 18 per cent that women receive today. This debate is inherently controversial and that is deliberate. As Emma Watson once said: “The reality is that if we do nothing it will take 75 years or for me to be nearly 100 before women can expect to be paid the same as men for the same work.” Irrespective of whether this proposition succeeds or not, its sole purpose is to draw attention to the prejudiced society we live and work in today. For those of you who are arguing that this proposition is unfair, discriminatory and goes entirely against working towards equality, welcome to life as a woman. Ma’am, I maintain the proposition and call for the *appel*.

The Deputy of Grouville (in the Chair):

Thank you. That closes the debate and I now ask the Greffier to call the roll. We now have the results of the debate on whether we should pay women higher wages than men. The result is a very narrow defeat: 10 votes *pour* and 12 *contre*.

POUR: 10		CONTRE: 12		ABSTAIN: 0
Moses Sappé		Henry Devenport		
Claire Le Fondré		Archie Willets		
Jude Anquetil		Max Firby		
Lilian O’Neill		George Dowling		
Amelie Byrne		Jem Gurner		
Alex Hamon		Darius Kayley		
Katie Bishop		Ralph Amos		
Bridget Le Brocq		Kenan Bryan		
Katie Le Saint		Ben Hafey		
Eleanor Bayley		Samuel Willis		
		Jason Da Costa		
		Axel Nixon		

So I would like to say well done to everyone who has participated and that brings us to the end of the Youth Assembly this year. Lisa is going to compile a few statistics for us. But, before she does, I would just like to say that today’s event has been brought about not without its challenges it has to be said, but in light of the circumstances, trying to do some things virtually and we have Beaulieu in the Chamber with us today, it has been quite a challenge. I will never underestimate being a Chair ever again. I would like to say that the running of these events goes like it has because of the tremendous work that is done by the States Greffe. I would like to pay special tribute to the Deputy Greffier, Lisa Hart, who does huge amounts of work in this area in the Youth Assembly. You can stamp your feet. That is what we do; we do not clap. **[Approbation]** The Assistant Greffier, Tim Oldham, all the I.T. people that are backing us up, Theo Stone, Aaron Travers and Lee Jeune from the Modernisation and the Digital Departments, I would like to pay special thanks to. This is the 23rd Youth Assembly of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. It is worth noting that 2 current Members of the States Assembly were Youth Assembly participants some years ago. Indeed, you might have heard one of them on the radio this morning. I am sure, having listened certainly to question time and grilling the Chief Minister and other Ministers ... to which I am very grateful and extend everyone’s thanks to them for giving up some time - but after today’s performance with your elegant, incisive and extremely thoughtful debates and questioning, we most certainly have an Assembly, or the participants of a future Assembly, here with us. Lisa has put together a few statistics after today and that is we got through 50 oral questions asked of the Ministers, 16 questions to the

Chief Minister in 23 minutes. That is some going for both the questioners and the Chief Minister. There were 49 speeches during 5 debates. So I would like to say well done everyone and I look forward to seeing you in this Assembly in the future. The Youth Assembly now stands adjourned for another year. Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

[17:45]