

STATES OF JERSEY

OFFICIAL REPORT

TUESDAY, 6th FEBRUARY 2024

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[9:30]

The Roll was called and the Dean led the Assembly in Prayer.

COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The Deputy Bailiff:

1.1 Welcome to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor

On behalf of Members, I should like to welcome His Excellency to the Chamber this morning.
[Approbation]

1.2 Welcome to Bishop Fanwell from the Diocese of Northern Malawi

In the gallery, I would like to welcome Bishop Fanuel from the Diocese of Northern Malawi.
[Approbation]

1.3 Letter sent to His Majesty the King

I would like to read to Members a letter that the Bailiff has sent this morning to His Majesty the King: “Your people in Jersey have learned with concern the news regarding Your Majesty’s health. That you have chosen to make public your illness can only give hope and support to those who are facing similar challenges. May we assure you, Sir, that you are in the thoughts and in the prayers of the people of Jersey, and we wish you well for a speedy and complete recovery.” [Approbation] We now move to the Consolidated Order paper.

APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS, COMMITTEES AND PANELS

2. Appointment of the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee

The Deputy Bailiff:

Under F the Assembly will be considering a number of appointments this morning and the first item is the selection of the chair of the Public Accounts Committee. In accordance with Standing Order 119, the Assembly is due to appoint a new chair of this committee and invite Members to make nominations for the chair of P.A.C. (Public Accounts Committee). Deputy Feltham, first.

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central:

I would like to nominate Deputy Inna Gardiner.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you very much. Is that seconded? [Seconded] Thank you very much. Are there any other nominations? If there are no other nominations, I invite Deputy Gardiner to speak for up to 10 minutes, after which there will be a period of questions for up to 20 minutes.

2.1 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North:

I would like to thank Deputy Feltham, the outgoing chair of P.A.C., for nominating me. While I wish her the best on the Executive side, and also to my seconder, who was a fellow member of my previous term as the head of P.P.C., the Constable of St. John. Here we are again. So I decided to put my name forward for the position of the chair of P.A.C. to ensure continuity and also see through recommendations from the P.A.C. legacy report that I signed back in 2022. It was amazing déjà vu when I yesterday prepared, and I found this report and looked through the recommendations that I have done, together with the committee, less than 2 years ago. I am grateful for the outgoing P.A.C. for taking it forward and looking at this. Having Deputy Feltham’s support also means the handover will be easy for me at least. I would like to start my speech with a bit of history. When I was first elected to this Assembly in March 2019, I expressed an interest to join Scrutiny Panels and Senator Ferguson asked me if I would like to join P.A.C. I would like to acknowledge her support and her willingness to pass on her knowledge to me, even though that we had quite different political views.

I was inspired by Senator Ferguson's spirit, her strength, her honesty and unflinching ability to take the hard task of examining the implementation of policy and holding senior government officers to account. I am grateful for her mentoring and support at my first stage at the States. This is the kind of States Assembly I aspire to be part of. P.A.C. is a very diverse and exciting committee, and I find myself working with a team of politicians and lay people for the good of the whole Island. We hold the chief executive, chief officers and other senior government officers to account, and we scrutinise where they have effectively and successfully implemented the policy that we politicians have spent hours debating and agreeing upon, and how it can be improved. The P.A.C. looks at when and how Government spends all the money. Yes, we do still have a lot of numbers to look at, but we are very lucky to have a highly competent Comptroller and Auditor General, Lynn Pamment, to help. I look forward to reconnecting with her again. I have already had a conversation with Deputy Feltham and the officers, and I am aware that the report for the follow-up review for performance management should be signed last week and it is now a new committee task. I am committed to take it forward as quick as possible. Other planned workstreams for 2024 include spending in Health. I would like to look into the recruitment and how H.R. (human resources) functions work. Procurement is a big task and the complaints process. I have moved from doing the work to checking the work, and I believe both roles are equally important and I will dedicate myself to fulfilling this role to the best interest of Jersey and its people. Members hopefully heard about and know about my collaborative approach, and I would like to take this opportunity and invite Members who are interested in joining the Public Accounts Committee please get in touch. Thank you in advance for your trust, and I look forward for your questions. **[Approbation]**

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy Gardiner. Are there any questions?

2.1.1 Deputy R.S. Kovacs of St. Saviour:

The candidate mentioned she would like to look at procurement. Can she explain exactly what areas of the procurement she sees are needing to be looked into?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you, Deputy, for your question. I think, first of all, the procurement as a whole, because procurement incorporates several workstreams. Being at the previous P.A.C., there are several concerns raised; I am sure that you have seen in the legacy report, being on the Executive side, that we need to progress with procurement.

[9:45]

It is the delays, it is the professionalism, it is the options, it is about the advertisers. For me and always, as maybe the Deputy knows, when I work I am looking strategically. I am looking around the piece as a whole and after recognising where the weaknesses are from that to make recommendations.

2.1.2 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

Is the candidate happy with the current procurement system that the Government is using?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

There are lots of gaps in the current procurement system. As an ex-Minister for Children and Education, the Education Department could not get on with the procurement because they were on different system. Again, I am not going to look only into the Education Department, but I know that it was the same problem within Health, and the same problem with the police and others. We do need to look into the procurement.

2.1.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

Could you outline what you hope to achieve by the end of the terms? What outcomes by 2026?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I thank the Deputy for her question. First of all, there are so many recommendations outstanding from the Comptroller and Auditor General and from P.A.C. It is extremely important if Government accepted recommendations that can improve efficiency and can improve the delivery, we must ensure that recommendations are implemented. To follow up for the recommendations, to make sure that we have a golden thread. We have so many different things that are not connected, from K.P.I.s (key performance indicators) to the well-being list. We make sure that everything that is done has a connection and follow each other. Also for me, customer feedback and complaint; how we really work with our public and make sure that they receive the best service possible.

2.1.4 Deputy M.R. Scott of St. Brelade:

It is understood that there was a tracker of the recommendations that had been made by the Comptroller and Auditor General with different departments and different officers being assigned responsibility for implementing them. How might you provide more traction in getting recommendations implemented?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I thank the Deputy for her question. We started the recommendation tracker together with the Deputy back in 2019 as members of the same Public Accounts Committee. During 2021, during my chairman of the P.A.C., we moved to a different system and I always criticised that it was so many ... I said different shades of amber because we could not see if it is 1 per cent or 20 per cent or 50 per cent, and what does it mean in practice? When I will be elected, one of the first things I would like to see is the current stage of the recommendations tracker. I definitely will hold a one to one with the C.E.O. (chief executive officer) to make sure that we have trackers, and we can go from one month to other months to follow up what has happened and what has been implemented.

2.1.5 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement:

Could the Deputy explain what method she will employ to ensure the voice of Islanders is reflected in the Scrutiny process?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I thank the Deputy for her question. I think that if I am looking back when we had the performance management review in 2021, 2022 and the estate management review, we wrote to more than 120 stakeholders. We wrote to charities, we wrote to the community group, we wrote to the businesses and asked for their submission. Some submissions were private, some submissions were public. We have considered and made sure that the public views are being held. Obviously it is also our reaching out and asking: what do you think about procurement, what difficulties you experience? It depends on really the theme of the review, but I definitely committed for reaching out to all stakeholders that we would consider as a committee relevant to the review and secondary.

2.1.6 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North:

Can the candidate explain the difference between the Public Accounts Committee and the 5 other Scrutiny Panels?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I thank the Deputy for his question. In general terms, the Public Accounts Committee scrutinises the offices and implementation; Scrutiny Panels scrutinise Ministers, proposed policies and legislation. Saying this, it is important to emphasise there are always grey areas, which not sure if it is

implementation or it is still policy under development. Personally I believe working across the panel and if we have an issue touching policy that is developed but being presented, but we have an implementation stage, we might need to create review panels that everyone from Scrutiny and the Public Accounts Committee representative can contribute.

2.1.7 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

Some of the work of P.A.C. - not entirely - is retrospective and will look at spending for the last couple of years. Does the candidate believe that it is slightly problematic that she will effectively be scrutinising her own ... the Government that she was a part of, and what they have been doing with their spending plans for the last 2 years? How can she reassure Members that she will do that robustly if she needs to?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I think it is a really good question and fair question. First of all, I am scrutinising officers from all departments for their delivery. Again, being fair, I said to my officers of the department that I was Minister of, where I saw that they delivered and where I saw they did not deliver. So it will not be a surprise to the officers from Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department where they know that they have not delivered what they promised. Saying this, I always take politics out of the scrutiny. For me Scrutiny and the Public Accounts Committee is apolitical. The third point I would like to make, the Public Accounts Committee is not just about accounts. I think major work ... and we have a Comptroller and Auditor General that supports. I always had a committee that had representations from across the Assembly. This will ensure that we have balanced views, and I can commit that we will have representations across the Assembly. We have lay Members who bring their knowledge of accounts, they bring their knowledge of audit. If I am going back to what I started; it is about the governance, it is about effectiveness, it is about performance. There are lots of other items that the Public Accounts Committee are looking at and not just one.

2.1.8 Deputy L. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

How would the candidate propose to deal with potential conflicts of interest if they may arise in the work of her panel?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

At P.A.C., when I was chair of the Public Accounts Committee, conflict of interest is the standing item on the agenda after who is present, who is not, and if any new conflict of interest. For every sitting of the Public Accounts Committee, we will check if any conflicts of interest arise. If it is, the member of the panel will not take part in the hearing or discussions, or in that part of work of the committee.

2.1.9 Connétable M.K. Jackson of St. Brelade:

Scrutiny Panels generally, in my experience, have produced some very good comprehensive reports on various matters. Would the candidate agree that reports produced need to be palatable and easily digested, so everybody can understand the gist of what the message is?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I cannot agree more with the Connétable. I think if we cannot express our recommendations and findings and the content in fewer pages, that it will be clearly understood by the public we do not do the job. It needs to be clear, straightforward; less, but straight to the point.

2.1.10 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South:

The Public Accounts Committee does not just look retrospectively, it can look proactively at policies that are already in place. With that in mind, can the candidate outline any major capital projects that she would be keeping an eye on during her term?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

First of all, I would meet with C. and A.G. (Comptroller and Auditor General) because I know that C. and A.G. had a report about the capitals project and we need to look. As I did previously, estate management was one of my key reports and I looked at the capitals project. I am pretty pleased to see that Piquet House on the Royal Square was refurbished. I remember taking photos when presenting the report that it was in an awful state and now we have a refurbished building. So, absolutely. What is important is that when we have all the chairs selected and the Scrutiny Liaison Committee will meet, that will make sure that we are not doing double work and it needs to be distributed right between the panels or we would create, I would say ... if you are thinking about the hospital, I believe that the hospital deserves its own standalone panel, with a representative from the P.A.C. on it.

2.1.11 Deputy T.A. Coles:

As a previous Member of the panel, and we have asked questions of officers around an I.T. (information technology) strategy, with a number of large capital projects on the agenda regarding I.T. infrastructure, is that an area that she would be interested in?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Absolutely. I.T. programme and I.T. infrastructure was part of the previous work recognised. I looked through the performance that it was included in this review. It is something that we will need to keep an eye on because the expenditure around I.T. going above and beyond, and the outcomes I would say are questionable.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Are there any further questions for Deputy Gardiner? If not, then I can confirm that Deputy Gardiner has been appointed chair of the Public Accounts Committee. **[Approbation]**

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I would like to thank Members, and I invite everyone who would like to join the committee, please express interest and contact me.

3. Appointment of the Chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy. In accordance with Standing Order 120, the Assembly is due to appoint a new chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. In accordance with Standing Order 120(1A), the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and Resources should neither nominate nor vote in relation to this appointment, although they are both able to ask questions. A number of people have put their lights on in relation to nominations, I expect. The first to do so was Deputy Jeune, then Deputy Gardiner, and then Deputy Doublet.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I would like to nominate Deputy Miles for the chair of Corporate Services.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Is that nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations?

Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville and St. Martin:

I would like to propose Deputy Montfort Tadier.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Is that nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations? In accordance with Standing Order 120, I will invite the candidates to speak and answer questions in the order in which they were nominated and, in the circumstances, I invite Deputy Tadier to withdraw for the period of the speech of Deputy Miles and her questions. Deputy Miles, you are able to, as you know, speak for up to 10 minutes and then we will face up to 20 minutes of questions.

3.1 Deputy H. Miles of St. Brelade:

I would like to begin by thanking the outgoing Scrutiny Panel for their work to date and, if appointed, I look forward to engaging with them in their new Ministerial roles and evaluating their legacy work. I am standing for this role today because I want to ensure that this panel can fulfil its role within our system of government, holding the Chief Minister and Minister for Treasury and Resources to account, and ensuring that government policies are evidence-based, proportionate and make a positive difference to the lives of Islanders.

[10:00]

Although I am still relatively new to this Assembly, I am not new to public service, and I believe that I am well-equipped to take on the role of chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. I have worked for over 30 years for the States of Jersey, leaving in 2018. My career included time working across a number of States departments, including probation and after-care, Home Affairs and the former Department of Community and Constitutional Affairs, operating as a policy director for the former Chief Minister in her capacity as Minister for Home Affairs. In parallel to my civil service role, I cultivated an academic career. I hold a PhD in applied social sciences, gained through part-time study over a period of eight years, and my strong academic background has developed critical-thinking skills and the ability to balance competing perspectives. I am able to assimilate large amounts of information quickly, gather evidence in different contexts using different methods, design complex research projects, author and disseminate reports and reviews for different audiences. I have published articles in local, national and international journals, and I also published a book about the role of the honorary system and its importance to Jersey. I have held academic positions at University College Jersey, the Institute of Law in Jersey, and as a fellow of the Hillary Rodham Clinton School of Law at Swansea University. From a leadership perspective, while working for the States of Jersey Police, I was selected by the Senior Police National Assessment Centre for a place on the strategic command course, the most prestigious leadership programme in British policing. Graduates of this programme qualify as senior leaders who are suitable for appointment to chief police officer roles throughout the U.K. (United Kingdom). I was especially proud to be the first woman from the Channel Islands to attend and pass this programme. Outside my professional life, I was a founder member of a very highly successful local charity. As chair and vice-chair, I led the development of the organisation from a small group of parents to a professional business that provides outstanding accredited services. I have actively participated in many and varied groups in a lay capacity, including as a member of the steering group on the citizen's jury on assisted dying on behalf of Deputy Richard Renouf, and on the access to justice working group as a representative of the Chief Minister of the time. The assisted dying work, in particular, required absolute impartiality to ensure that the evidence presented to the jury was factual and balanced. More recently, as Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, I chaired Ministerial groups and led discussions about complex issues, in particular the Ministerial Safeguarding Group, which brought people together to focus on challenging issues that can have a profound effect or impact on the lives of Islanders. I have had exposure to Scrutiny and the process from several different perspectives. I have given evidence to panels in a personal capacity, in both private and public hearings. I have contributed to reviews through my charity role and as part of the student loan support group, and I found the process to be very effective in listening to my views. I was heartened to see how the process held relevant Ministers to account for matters that affected me, my family and people affected by policy decisions. In my role as policy

director, my interaction with the scrutiny process was twofold. As a senior leader, I attended quarterly hearings with my Minister to provide support and detailed feedback about both operational and policy issues. From a legislative perspective, I led the development of a number of laws that were successfully passed by the Assembly. There are 2 in particular that are worthy of note. The Criminal Procedure Law and the Sexual Offences Law, both passed in 2018, modernised the landscape of criminal justice in Jersey. I can honestly say that these 2 laws were considerably improved due to the engagement of Scrutiny at a very early stage. I ensured close liaison with Members throughout the development process rather than at the end. The members of the panel offered alternative perspectives and proposed realistic alternatives to tricky concepts, and this element of combined consultation was very welcome. This way of working also ensured that very tight timescales could be honoured, and Deputy Mézec will, I am sure, remember the impact of working in such a collaborative way. In 2019, after I had left the employ of the States of Jersey, I applied to be a lay member of the Public Accounts Committee under the chair of Deputy Inna Gardiner. This proved to be a very positive experience, and we worked on the performance management review, producing a comprehensive set of findings and recommendations that have recently been addressed by the outgoing Scrutiny Panel. It was a great opportunity to develop questioning skills and work within a highly-motivated team to achieve positive outcomes. Partly as a consequence of a successful term on the Public Accounts Committee, I decided to stand for election as Parish Deputy in 2022. Subsequently, in my Ministerial role, I was scrutinised by the Children and Home Affairs Panel, and I thoroughly enjoyed working with that Scrutiny Panel. For my part, I ensured that panel members were invited to every event, conference or workshop that I held as Minister and were made aware at an early stage of potential issues that might affect the public related to my Ministry. I valued their views and their contribution and, more importantly, their challenge. They were truly a critical friend and helped me to make better decisions. The Work Permit Review Panel provided important findings that have driven improvement and, again, I highly valued their contribution. As a result, discussions began to make changes to some areas of practice and I was able to commission a permit worker portal to support communication and exchange of information before I departed my Ministerial role. The Corporate Services Panel has a very broad remit, holding the Chief Minister and Minister for Treasury and Resources to account. The departments within are significant, comprising 10 different areas of focus including communications, modernisation and digital, people services, Ministerial support, statistics and analysis, strategic finance and commercial services. Scrutiny is often described as a critical friend, and it is important that the first part of the term is not the most dominant. A critical friend is one who builds and maintains relationships of trust, brings relevant knowledge and experience, motivates and reassures, understands the complexities of the change progress, is an advocate for the success of the work and perhaps, most importantly, is concerned for the outcomes and effectiveness of the policy or law that is under scrutiny. I believe that Scrutiny done well can be constructive, productive, influential, and transformational. There is much to do, and we need to be working to our strengths, to maintain momentum and to nurture the trust and confidence of the public in the scrutiny process. As a result of my breadth of experience, I feel that I am able to bring stability, energy and leadership to deliver effective challenge across this broad portfolio. I have the knowledge, skills and experience to develop a team that will be diligent and objective in our work or question objectively, challenge appropriately, listen to the public and make positive contribution. If I am appointed to this role, I will ensure the panel provides robust, evidence-based, forensic and constructive scrutiny of the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury Resources.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy Miles. Do we have questions for Deputy Miles?

3.1.1 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Would the candidate advise which practices she should implement in her chairing the panel around the teamwork, about doing the reviews.?

Deputy H. Miles:

The first thing that I would be looking to do is to establish a very diverse panel. As I have mentioned, it is a very diverse portfolio and we will need a range of expertise from across the Assembly in order to help us address the challenge. I would be liaising with the chair of the Scrutiny Liaison Committee to establish training for any new members, not only in questioning skills but also in team building. We have not got long left. We have got 2 years and it is very important that people can work very quickly, collaboratively and in a focused way to deliver successful outcomes.

3.1.2 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you for the candidate for the question; and how the candidate would engage with the public.

Deputy H. Miles:

The voice of the public is critical to Scrutiny, and the voice of the public, I think, in these days is becoming more and more difficult to hear. Apart from the measures that have been mentioned before in the traditional social media and mainstream media ways, I think it is very important to go out and seek hard-to-reach views. I would certainly be looking at the Youth Service and the Children's Service from a children's participation point of view. Quite often children and young people are not heard when it comes to Scrutiny reviews, so I think we would have to think very carefully about how we reach the public. Of course, we have an excellent communication team at the States Greffe who could be used to their full advantage.

3.1.3 Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier South:

The outgoing panel was part of the way through a review on people and culture, and had received quite a lot of very powerful testimonies from people working across the public service about the issues that they face at work and what the Government could or should be doing to improve those. Could I ask the candidate if it is her intention to pick up and carry on with that review, which was only part of the way through, or would she be planning not to do that?

Deputy H. Miles:

I thank the Deputy for the question. As part of the preparation for today, I had a long conversation with the panel officer who explained to me the status of the people and culture review, and also some of its background. My plan would be to go ahead to bring that report to a conclusion as soon as possible, using existing evidence. There has clearly been substantial evidence gathered to date and a lot of submissions. I believe from what she tells me, that other areas have come out of the people and culture review that will also require some attention areas, such as occupational health and well-being, which were not originally envisaged. So if I am successful, it would be my intention to bring this review to a conclusion and to get it published.

3.1.4 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

Can the candidate give an example of a review where she has been out of the comfort zone?

Deputy H. Miles:

I am sorry, could the Deputy just repeat the last bit of the question? Out of the ...?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Your comfort zone.

Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

When the Deputy has been out of her comfort zone on a review.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Out of your comfort zone.

Deputy H. Miles:

I thank you for the question. This Deputy is out of her comfort zone most of the time, I have to say. Yes, there have been many times. I was quite apprehensive about joining the Public Accounts Committee because I do not have a background in treasury and finance. But through drawing on the expertise of others, having lay members and being prepared to listen and take advice from people who know much more about the subject than I do, that is how I help myself come slightly back into a comfort zone.

3.1.5 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

The Deputy has mentioned she has been part of a few reviews. Can she give a list of the reviews she has been part of?

Deputy H. Miles:

From a Scrutiny perspective, as when I was a lay member, I was part of the performance management review. That is the only review that I have been part of contributing to that review. But I have given evidence to social security reviews. Certainly my role at Autism Jersey has seen me give evidence to panels over disability issues. Also from the student loan support group perspective, trying to gain a policy position on funding students for higher education. As I have said, I was on the steering group for the citizen's jury on assisted dying, and generally throughout my career I have acted as either lead or contributing to various views, reports and panels.

3.1.6 Deputy M.R. Scott:

What experience does the candidate have that would enable or support her to pursue value-for-money objectives in government administration?

Deputy H. Miles:

Certainly when you are looking at value-for-money reviews, there needs to be an understanding of the nature of the operation that is being performed. My recent experience over value-for-money reviews has been as a result of the value-for-money reviews that were being imposed on the Home Affairs Department. In terms of skills to deal with that, again, it is about assimilating information quickly, understanding the operational impact and challenging departments who will often say that we do not have enough money, and challenging them in looking at different ways of achieving objectives.

[10:15]

3.1.7 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Given that the panel has a macroeconomic role, does the candidate feel that the business community has an adequate voice in the work of the C.S.S.P. (Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel)?

Deputy H. Miles:

I cannot talk for panels that have gone before but, as I said in my speech, I give an undertaking that we will be consulting widely with the business community. As the Deputy will know, Scrutiny are able to use experts in specific fields, and perhaps that is one area where some expert advice might be required.

3.1.8 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Would the candidates explain what the intended outcomes would be by 2026? What would the candidate hope to achieve by the end of the term?

Deputy H. Miles:

Thank you for the question. Certainly my Ministerial role, I was known as being quite productive, and I think I would like to increase the productivity of the panel. Again, having spoken to the panel officer yesterday, there are a number of laws that are likely to be coming forward for scrutiny, including the charities law, the inquest law, the Comptroller and Auditor General law. From a Government Plan perspective, and certainly C.S.S.P.'s perspective, I guess that will depend on the current Council of Ministers and whether there are going to be any revisions to those plans. What I would hope is that we will certainly have undertaken at least 2 full reviews by the end of the term.

3.1.9 Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier Central:

Just a slight change to my question after so many answers. Can I ask the Deputy whether there is an example of Scrutiny or the outcomes of Scrutiny, where an opinion at the start may have been changed by the outcome of that scrutiny process?

Deputy H. Miles:

I think the best example I can give is probably around the work permit review, when initially we were under the impression that communication was fairly good. What we were doing was probably the right direction to head in. But, after careful consideration of that report, it became apparent that we could be doing much more and the messaging was not hitting perhaps where it should have been. That is one example I can give.

3.1.10 Deputy R.J. Ward:

One of the ways in which my views changed during Scrutiny was when we engaged with young people. Can I ask the Deputy how she may engage, particularly with school children, to educate them in the process of Scrutiny and the importance of engagement of Scrutiny and wider politics in the island?

Deputy H. Miles:

I am aware that we have a political education group within the States Greffe, and they do very good work bringing the year 5s into the Assembly and explaining the role, et cetera. We also have within Children, Young People, Education and Skills participation standards, which really set the direction for how we should engage with young people. I think it is very important that children's voice is heard in everything we do, and quite often they are the last voices that we listen to. Perhaps in some areas they should be the first.

3.1.11 Deputy E. Millar of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

I think the candidate has probably already answered my question in part. Does the candidate already have a view personally on specific areas which she believes should be scrutinised over the next couple of years, or will she develop a work plan in collaboration with relevant Ministers?

Deputy H. Miles:

Clearly, if I am appointed today, I would want to be talking to the panel about the specific priorities and the specific order that we would do that. My approach is very collaborative, and I would be wanting to talk to Ministers, both informally and formally, about where those Ministers can get the best value out of Scrutiny, because Ministers cannot do everything, and sometimes Scrutiny can be very supportive in that role. I have to say, talking to the officer yesterday, and in view of some of the comments that have been made publicly, I would think that one of the first areas of work - not

necessarily a top priority, but one of the first areas of work - would be around the role of the Jersey Public Services Ombudsman, and where we are with that, given that it was a 100-day priority for the former Chief Minister. But there seems to have been some declaration that that will not be a priority for the current Council of Ministers.

3.1.12 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

We often get criticised here for the move from the committee system of Government to Ministerial. Does the candidate consider that the Scrutiny structure that we have replaces the committee system, which we had before, and how might she better exploit that?

Deputy H. Miles:

I thank the Connétable for his question. I am old enough to remember the committee system, and I think when I joined the civil service, in the mid-1980s, we still had a Defence Committee that we were responsible to. I do not think anything can actually ever replace the committee system. Obviously we have a different system, but the Scrutiny Panels and committees, I guess, are the nearest thing to what we had. I think the Scrutiny Panels can be well-exploited and particularly in liaison with the Parishes and liaison with the Comité de Connétable. I think they are a very useful vehicle for feeding in disparate views from the Parishes into the decision-making process.

3.1.13 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Very often we have experienced sometimes clashes between Scrutiny Panels and, can I say, obstreperous Ministers, not naming anybody in particular. How would she propose to deal with personality clashes in those situations?

Deputy H. Miles:

I think dealing with personality clashes and conflict is almost an everyday occurrence for a States Member. Certainly in my work experience it has been quite a feature, shall I say. I think when you have a chair of a panel who is setting out a very clear vision and focusing on the outcomes, it is much easier to achieve consensus. Everybody's view is important and everybody's view needs to be taken into account. I think by focusing on the outcome, it means that there is a lot of space for different voices and opportunities to resolve conflicts in a very respectful and dignified way.

3.1.14 Deputy L. Stephenson:

How would the candidate manage conflicts of interest, should they arise during her work chairing the panel?

Deputy H. Miles:

I thank the Deputy for the question, and I am going to echo Deputy Gardiner's response. I think it is very important that all conflicts of interests are declared. We have a curious system where we declare formal conflicts of interest but I do think there is something about informal conflicts of interest in a community that is so small. I do not know how we get to declaring relationship conflicts of interests other than those that are obvious; I am married to or so-and-so is my partner. But I do think it is something that we need to give some consideration to.

3.1.15 Deputy L. Stephenson:

Does the candidate think that members of Scrutiny could do well with some training, potentially in conflicts of interest?

Deputy H. Miles:

I think that is one area where Scrutiny would benefit. But I think we have a lot of new Members in the Assembly. I certainly benefited from some really excellent training that was put on when I was a member of the Public Accounts Committee, helping me not just understand the role of Scrutiny,

but practical things like questioning skills, working together as a team to achieve a specific outcome during a specific hearing. But I do think, and I know P.P.C. are looking at codes of conduct, and I know there will be some questions around perhaps changes to the Commissioner of Standards. But I think conflict of interest is a particular issue that we should never lose sight of. Sometimes the training we have had I describe as a bit of a sheep dip. You get it in the first week, and then 2 years later you cannot really remember what went on because such a lot went on in the first week. I think it is necessary that that point is raised.

3.1.16 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier Central:

The candidate just mentioned productivity and how to improve the productivity of a panel. Can she say how she would measure productivity in any panel?

Deputy H. Miles:

I am a great fan of outcomes-based accountability, which obviously focuses on outcomes as success factors. The way to measure productivity really is to look at how much you have done, how well you have done it. But really the most important thing: is actually anybody better off? Because we could churn out lots and lots of reports but if they do not have the impact on the community and they do not drive change, there is very little point in producing them. I would have quite a laser focus on the outcomes, ensuring that at the end of these reports the public will be better off.

3.1.17 Deputy G.P. Southern:

One of the skills required in Scrutiny is the ability to say: “This inquiry stops now. Whatever it says, we publish it and that is what we are going to say. “ So drawing things to an end is one of the skills the candidate would need. To what extent has she got those skills?

Deputy H. Miles:

I thank the Deputy for the question. There is something called the Nimrod effect, is there not? The Nimrod aircraft that never, ever got finished because people kept adding bits and pieces to it. The key to that is to have a very firm terms of reference at the beginning of the review, and understand what you are aiming to do, what you are aiming to achieve and do that. That does not mean to say that there may be some bits of the evidence that you have gathered that warrant further work at a later stage, but in order to deliver on time and deliver according to the remit, I think the terms of reference is the key to that.

3.1.18 Deputy A. Howell of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

I just wondered if the Deputy could explain what she will do as chair of a panel, if the recommendations of her panel are not taken seriously by a Minister.

Deputy H. Miles:

Again, I think that comes down to the use of the evidence. We should be following the evidence. We should be following them in an impartial way. I do wonder, and I did have some experience of this over the work permit panel review. I think I misunderstood some of the recommendations. So I think it is very important that the recommendations in those circumstances are revisited, so that the Minister is very clear about what the panel is suggesting should happen.

The Deputy Bailiff:

There is 50 seconds left. A final question? No? Deputy Miles, can I invite you, please, to withdraw and if Deputy Tadier could, please, return to the Chamber?

[10:30]

Deputy Tadier, you have up to 10 minutes to address the Assembly and you will then face up to 20 minutes of questions.

3.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

It is always a slight disadvantage to go second just because you normally need one minute to get your breath back, but I will do that now. First of all, we have been focusing quite a lot on Ministers for the last few weeks and months; I think that has been natural but it is nice that the Assembly can now get back to focusing on maybe an equally important area, that of Scrutiny, now that the dust has settled. It has been a privilege ... it is a privilege to put myself forward for the role of chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. For clarification, for anyone listening, the panel looks at the work of the Chief Minister's Department and that of the Minister for Treasury and Resources. To put things clearly, I would like to break this presentation into 2 parts. The first to demonstrate my understanding of the role and the value of Scrutiny, and the second to show why I believe I am the best candidate for this position. From my perspective, Scrutiny is not the poor relation to the more lofty work of Ministerial office. For me, Ministerial and Scrutiny roles have equal value, both are vital functions of this Assembly. As someone who learned the political ropes from the Back Benches, the value in the clear principles of the scrutiny function are hardwired into my political D.N.A. (Deoxyribonucleic acid). Now, what do I mean by that? Well, from 2009, just after being elected, I cut my political teeth on the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. It was chaired at that time by Deputy Roy Le Hérisse. I think some Members may remember him, I certainly remember him fondly. He is still with us, by the way, this is not any kind of obituary for him. He was in many ways an ideal mentor. He is somebody who had long States experience, he was always able to see both sides of the argument - the joke was that he could find a fence in the middle of the desert - and he was also a really clear communicator. You could hear him, basically. But, joking aside, crucially, he was one of those politicians who was around when Ministerial Government was introduced so he remembered the committee system and he was also one of those who was first introduced to Scrutiny. I think it was called Shadow Scrutiny back then and it came in officially. So he, like those older Members, was very much aware of the sound principles and the need for constructive and effective scrutiny in this new Ministerial system. But we are no longer in 2009, we are in 2024 and, as a senior politician now and a scrutineer, I am now seeking to put all of my skills and experience to good use in this role. I think it is important that we go back to basics in Scrutiny, and I would summarise that in the following 3 ways. The first is that Scrutiny is not there to create alternative policy but to review policy and legislation from Ministers. As scrutineers, our primary function is to hold Ministers to account. As Deputy Gardiner told us earlier, to do that we lay our own personal thoughts, manifestos and preconceptions aside. As Deputy Southern has told us so many times, we take off that hat and we put on our Scrutiny hat. That is the first thing we do. The second is that there must be a presumption that Scrutiny is done in public. I am keen to emphasise this point. I have seen a creeping move over the years to hearings and briefings taking place in private, when they do not need to be. I know that there is a time and a place for receiving confidential submissions and briefings. I have sat on many reviews which deal, of course, with sensitive issues and it is right that there are occasions where members of the public, in particular, can feel that they can give scrutineers information in private and, similarly, there will be sensitive issues that Government need to talk to us about in private. But these should be the exception not the rule. The third point is simple scrutiny must be evidence-based. Good scrutiny leads to good Government, provided, of course, that Government listens. But if the process is right, then I believe that Government will listen. So these are the 3 high-level principles that will guide me when carrying out the role. It will be this objectivity, transparency of process and an evidence-based approach that gives the panel's work and recommendations weight and credibility. Now, when it comes to an effective Scrutiny Panel or effective scrutiny, full stop, a chair is only as good as his or her panel and the panel is only as good as its members and, of course, its Scrutiny officers, but we always have good Scrutiny officers. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the work that they do, often so unseen in the background but adding so much value to that process. I would also emphasise that there is no place for ego on Scrutiny but talent is of course always welcome. I would like to put together a team with diverse strengths and experience from

across the Assembly, and I thank those Members who have already registered a desire to join or to rejoin the panel. Members will know that I have extensive and wide-ranging experience on various scrutinies over the last 15 years. These have included scrutinising things like the prison, the police, including the use of Tasers and the use of C.C.T.V. (closed circuit television), but also education, parks and gardens, housing and environment. I will not labour the point, but I hope Members will take all this experience into account and agree that I have done more than my apprenticeship in terms of Scrutiny and that I am very well placed to transfer this experience and these skills to lead the panel. This practical experience is also underpinned by excellent training that we have received over the years. I also have to commend the great work of the Greffe staff who have provided training locally but also abroad in the U.K. For example, drawing from our Commonwealth links that we have with the C.P.A. (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association). I, for one, am actually proud of those C.P.D. (continuing professional development) opportunities that States Members generally are given, and certainly scrutineers also benefit from them to this day. This practical experience is underpinned by excellent training, ongoing C.P.D., including first-class seminars on question technique. I remember that we received, back in the day, from the Solicitor General of the day, Howard Sharpe - I think I can mention his name - a very good questioning technique on how not to let Ministers get away with non-answers. I have to say, departing slightly from my pre-written speech that I wrote incidentally, that I have seen examples of good scrutiny, mediocre scrutiny and bad scrutiny. The classic one is when the panel simply invites the Minister to open up and 10 minutes later he or she is still speaking. That is not the way to do it. You need to have that balance between open and closed questioning and that is what we were reminded about. Know where you want to go with your questions; it is not simply tea and biscuits with the Ministers. So, of course, that included C.P.A. workshops, visits to Select Committee hearings in Westminster but also in the other devolved Assemblies of the home nations. That is really, I think, an area that has helped me hone my questioning skills and, I hope, become a highly-effective scrutineer. I would like to turn to some of the more immediate work of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. There is one urgent legacy issue which needs to be completed in short order. That is the follow up to the people and culture review, which was published in 2021. I have spoken to the Scrutiny officer, who agrees that there is now enough good evidence for this report to be concluded and published, and I would look to do that in short order. But there are some other urgent issues coming down the pipeline. I know that the ongoing panel were building up to a review of the Public Service Ombudsman. That is something that I would also wish to prioritise when that legislation finally comes through. It is currently with the law draftsmen. I know that there will also be a need to scrutinise the very important O.E.C.D. (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) Pillar Two taxation rules that are coming forward to deal with tax challenges arising from the digitalisation of the economy. I also know that I would like to put a specialist sub-panel together to scrutinise this, but in any case it is a review that will fall between both Corporate Services and International Affairs more generally. I know we are coming to the 10-minute mark. I will emphasise the need for timely scrutiny, early legislation scrutiny, because we do not have a second Chamber so the role of Scrutiny is more important. I will simply sum up by saying this - I know we will get questions in a moment - I hope Members will agree that I have all the skills, experience and ability to carry out this role to a high standard. I thank Members for their attention in this matter and I look forward to Members' questions.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy. The first question is from the Connétable of St. Saviour.

3.2.1 Connétable K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour:

May I begin by very quickly mentioning that Sunday last I had lunch with former Deputy Le Hérissier and both he and his good lady are indeed in excellent health. My question to the candidates is: could the candidate - I know he has touched on this very quickly - outline his top 5 topics that he wishes to handle?

Deputy M. Tadier:

In a sense, it is not for me to say what the topics are. I mean, Scrutiny is there to serve the Assembly and to look at legislation that comes forward. What I would say is that I hope we are going to see more legislation coming forward than we have in the last couple of years. Very much the Public Services Ombudsman is one that I very much support the principle of and that the panel will need to see the fine detail of that. I do not think I will be able to give 5 necessarily. The taxation work is going to be crucial. I think one good thing that the panel can do is set up sub-panels so that even if Members do not necessarily wish to be permanent members of a Scrutiny Panel, they can come and join a panel for specific reviews. But there will be reviews that the public can also suggest. I think the other part of my speech, which I did not get round to, is the fact that we have to be responsive to the public when they suggest areas of scrutiny that maybe we, and even Ministers, have not thought of. Sorry if that does not answer the question directly.

3.2.2 Deputy M.R. Scott:

What experience does the candidate have that would enable or support him to pursue value-for-money objectives in government administration?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I have said in this Assembly before that there are 2 types of savings or inefficiencies. You can have inefficiencies because you do not invest enough in the first place or you can have inefficiencies because you are spending too much money in the wrong places. I am very much open-minded to the fact that just because we spend money does not mean it is automatically well spent and just because we save money does not automatically mean it is not well spent. I will qualify that by saying I am not going for the position of Public Accounts Committee but it is important that all chairs, I think, are mindful of that. Can I also add that I know that one of the central pieces of work that the previous panel was doing was looking at the value-for-money savings and whether they were effective. I would very much look to continue that piece of work as an ongoing process, which I think is fundamental to Corporate Services.

3.2.3 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Given the panel's macroeconomic role, how would the candidate be ensuring that the business community have adequate input into the work of the panel?

Deputy M. Tadier:

When I embark on a review, and I have done this with other panels, we sit down and we make sure that we have a full list of all the stakeholders that we need to engage with and then we come back to that list a day after and make sure that we have not forgotten anybody. So, of course, we would be inviting all of the major stakeholders but even the ones that sometimes get forgotten. We also have to be mindful of the fact that we have the Fiscal Policy Panel, and we do listen to them. Scrutiny does not act in isolation and we have both standing advisers we can call on but also advisers that we can use on an ad hoc basis.

[10:45]

3.2.4 Deputy R.J. Ward:

I think I will ask the same question of this candidate. Where can the candidate say they have had their minds changed or their view changed by a piece of scrutiny in the past?

Deputy M. Tadier:

That is a good question. I think it is right that even though we do take that hat off and put it on, we are all human so we go into certain reviews maybe with certain prejudices. I think 2 examples are probably around Tasers and the use of C.C.T.V. I very much went into those reviews being anti-

Taser and being slightly sceptical about the use of C.C.T.V. but by the end of it, certainly when it came to C.C.T.V., I saw the value of it. I saw that the police and the civilian members in the police really did take human rights seriously and data protection. Even on the issue of Tasers, I was moved to a position of greater understanding where I was very softened to that being used in the portfolio of the police. I hope that answers that.

3.2.5 Deputy R.J. Ward:

May I ask the candidate, one of the ways in which my opinion has changed in the past is from input from young people. How would the candidate ensure that young people are heard, particularly school children, and given the value and the understanding of the process of Scrutiny?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes. I think that is fundamental. I think public engagement is something that panels have done really well. I see them out in King Street, they have been in Grande Marché, and that is not just recently, it has been a growing trend. I think that Scrutiny has a function to play in our schools as well. We should be going into schools banging the drum for Scrutiny and telling youngsters that it is an equally important part of Government and the Assembly's work.

3.2.6 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

The Connétable earlier, I think, took the question I was going to ask in another angle. I would like to ask the candidate: what emphasis will he place on the importance of an evidence-based approach to the work of Scrutiny, and why do you think that this is important?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I hope I addressed that very early on in my speech but I am happy to underline the importance of an evidence base. Again, it is one of the 3 underpinning principles that would lead me. Of course, it has to be fundamental because we are not there to promote our own policies; we can do that as individual Members. As Back-Benchers we can bring propositions but when it comes to that function, if it is not evidence based it is not going to stand up effectively. I would not want to bring anything to this Assembly or put anything with my name to it that has not been thorough, well researched and evidence-based.

3.2.7 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The outgoing Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel had been part of the way through a follow-up review on people and culture and had received lots of very valuable testimonies from people working across the public service about the way that employees are treated and things that may need to change as a result of that. Could the Deputy confirm if he is elected as chair of this panel, is it his intention to continue with that follow-up review or will he look at doing things differently?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I have spoken to the officer, the lead officer, for that. I have had a brief conversation with Deputy Mézec and I have had a chance to look at the report that was originally published by the then Senator Moore's panel in 2021. I recognise this as a continuum. The Scrutiny officer said that she believes there is enough evidence to publish that report now. It may well be that the report needs to be published as an interim, with its interim findings, and it could well be that this is an area which the panel needs to keep an eye on going forward in the next couple of years. Because I think workplace culture is fundamental and we know that there are things across departments that need to change but I think that message is being loudly understood by the new Government, I would hope.

3.2.8 Deputy L. Stephenson:

How would the candidate manage conflicts of interest should they arise during their work chairing the panel?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I slightly anticipated this question because I heard it asked to the now chair of P.A.C., and I think the very simple answer is that the code of conduct is very clear when it comes to conflicts of interest, is that you must identify and declare conflicts of interest and resolve them in the public interest. That is what I would make sure that I do. I do not think it is something that we necessarily do enough, if I can say that in an Assembly. It used to be the case that you would jump up and offer potential conflicts of interest and I think it is better to err to the side of caution and be told by the Chair that that is not really a conflict of interest but thanks for flagging it up. I think the more transparency we can have, and if we can lead by showing transparent behaviour, then I think that is important. Thank you for that question.

3.2.9 Deputy L. Stephenson:

Does the candidate think that Scrutiny members would benefit from training on conflict of interest, not only in identifying their own but where there could potentially be others in the work that they are scrutinising? I would just add on as part of that, to explore the relationship going forward when there are members of his political party in Government and how that relationship may work with Scrutiny members and Ministerial members from the party.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think to be fair one of the considerations of going for a chair was that I will not be scrutinising any of my party colleagues in these positions. I think even if that were the case, I have got the capability to put that aside because I certainly do not give my party colleagues an easy ride, whether it is in this Assembly or in private meetings, and I will not be giving the Minister for Treasury and Resources or the Chief Minister an easy ride. But, similarly, I will be there to do Scrutiny properly and to do it objectively. I do not have any scores to settle but I want to see this Government succeed. I want to see this Assembly succeed. I think that is in everyone's interest that Scrutiny should be done properly.

3.2.10 Deputy I. Gardiner:

The response to the Connétable of St. Saviour has pushed me to ask a different question. As the Deputy knows, there is a people and culture review which needs to be concluded and the Deputy mentioned value for money and mentioned that it is important that the public can express opinions. At the same time, the Deputy is standing to be the chair of the Corporate Services Panel and has been so long in the States and around, what would the Deputy's preference, or if possible to name some subjects, for possible reviews that will be discussed at the committee and what the Deputy himself would propose for reviews?

Deputy M. Tadier:

The first thing we need to remember is that this Government needs to have a period of time to produce its own strategic vision, which will then be scrutinised by Scrutiny Panels. I think the value-for-money savings is a fundamental piece of work that I would want to continue. As I have said, I have seen examples of cuts in the past which have led to problems now but I have seen areas that need more investment that have not got that. No doubt there will be areas of effective savings across the board. Until we know the work programme of this Government, we cannot really say what we will be scrutinising. Like I said, we have to be reactive to Government. I will wait for the supplementary.

3.2.11 Deputy I. Gardiner:

It is one approach to be reactive to the Government and a second approach, as the Deputy mentioned, to listen to the public. What are the Deputy's views of what the public would like to see being scrutinised currently?

Deputy M. Tadier:

So I think in terms of the Chief Minister's and the Treasury Department, it is cost of living. I think fundamentally that the last Government was correct. I think we all need to listen to people who are really finding cost of living difficult. I would be very surprised if the Chief Minister does not come forward with putting that at the top of his list. But, similarly, any tax proposals that come forward from the Minister for Treasury and Resources that might affect working people in Jersey and their disposable income or if there are initiatives to try and ease that burden on lower and middle earners, then that will equally need to be scrutinised but done objectively, not by substituting some idea that I have of the ideal policy.

3.2.12 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf of St. Saviour:

The new Government is like all previous Governments in Jersey, effectively a minority Government in the sense that the number of Ministers and Assistant Ministers are a minority. This new Government is a slightly new variant of a previous one that had mainly members of the Reform Party. I wish them sincerely well. We all want the Government, as the candidate said, to deliver and be properly scrutinised. My question, therefore, is being that he is a long-standing member of Reform, how will he deal and manage the tensions that will inevitably rise - we have just heard one on tax - in scrutinising areas of government policy, given his party allegiance? One very good example is that of tax.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I fundamentally disagree with the premise of that question. I could ask any Member of this Assembly who is serving on Scrutiny who has been in the previous Government whether they have got a conflict of interest and whether they will approach it with a clean pair of hands. The difference is our manifesto is published. It is quite clear when I am acting in the Assembly in a party capacity and, hopefully, when I am acting in a Scrutiny chair capacity. I will be under probably even more scrutiny than an independent Member would be. It is not in my interest to try and be biased in this. If I want to do political grandstanding and also bring propositions, I will do that in my own name, as I have done with the ceasefire in Gaza, or I will do it in the party name where it has been approved. These are long-established principles that other Parliaments throughout the Commonwealth deal with. We have to get to the point that having an overt party is not a dirty thing and maybe having secret parties is the problem.

3.2.13 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

I thank the candidate for his answer. My question is in no way negative or critical. I entirely understand the issue has developed in other places but it is not developed here. On that issue of tax, if I could just ask him, he has got ... absolutely, and he is right, and Reform are fine. They have a stated position on tax, he is going to be, if he is successful, the chair of the panel that scrutinises the Minister for Treasury and Resources. It is not a case of clean hands but how will he deal with the tension, absolutely open tension, that he has in a declaration of a tax system or criticism of it against the Minister for Treasury and Resources, who he is known to have had quite sparring views on in the past? It is entirely constructive: how is he going to deal with the inevitability of the tensions that will arise to make it work, not not work?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Again, I reject the premise of that question. There is no inevitability about these tensions. We have different political opinions. There will be Members who support progressive taxation, there are Members who support regressive or the current level of taxation. I am not here to represent my own political views on Scrutiny, I am there to speak to the Minister about what her objectives are, to talk to her officers about what her objectives are and to scrutinise her policy. I will do that to the best of

my ability and I will do that in an evidence-based and transparent way with the help of my panel, which will be wide and diverse.

3.2.14 Deputy E. Millar:

I think the candidate touched on this in his speech but just in the interest of fairness, does the candidate already have a view on specific areas which he believes should be scrutinised or will he develop a work plan in collaboration with the relevant Ministers?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think the move to independent taxation is going to be an area that definitely needs more scrutiny. We are on today's Order Paper that we have some small but important changes coming through because of the C.E.D.A.W. (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women) recommendations and the fact that a very limited area of inheritance is basically sexist and it favours the paternal side of the family. There are always going to be areas that come through. I think very fundamentally ... I think previous Governments have painted themselves into a very difficult corner when it comes to independent taxation because they have not followed through the logical conclusions of what they are trying to do. We know that change is difficult in the Island and I think that is where Scrutiny can add value to take people on that journey with us to explain it to them, but also to listen to them about what their concerns are and then bring recommendations to Government in that regard.

3.2.15 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Could the candidate outline what his intended outcomes will be in terms of the work of the panel?

Deputy M. Tadier:

When I look back to 2009, I was surprised just how productive the Scrutiny Panels were. Not because I was on them, incidentally but just we were very productive back then producing review after review. The key thing is not to let reviews go on for too long. You need to know when is a good time to say: "We have the evidence, let us analyse the evidence, let us produce a report, publish it and we stand by that review." I am not going to give a comprehensive list of what those future reviews might be, apart from the ones that I have already mentioned.

[11:00]

But the point is that Scrutiny needs to be chaired effectively and efficiently. It is in our interest, it is in Government's interest to do that. I go back to the point about early sight of legislation and policy. The more legislation we can do in advance means we do not need to call things in at a later stage, potentially to delay them. If the Government is not coming forward with legislation, is not giving it to us on time, then unfortunately things will have to get pulled in.

3.2.16 Deputy A. Howell:

Very quickly, thank you. It was just to ask if, as chair of the panel, the Minister declines to accept your recommendations, what will you do? What will the Deputy do?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I would hope that you have a whole toolkit of powers of persuasion initially. I think it is in the interests not to try and cut corners, because we have seen instances where recommendations are perhaps not being properly responded to and that just delays the process for everyone. The Scrutiny Panel will get answers one way or the other and if they are not done immediately, it simply means that we are wasting officers time on both sides. I think that message ... I am not anticipating any games to be played on either side. While we have different political opinions, I fully believe that the 2 Ministers and the departments I will be scrutinising have integrity and I look forward potentially to working with them.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy. That brings the period of questions to an end. I invite Deputy Miles to return to the Chamber. As there are 2 candidates, the electronic voting system will be used. Any Member wishing to vote for Deputy Miles should press the pour button. Members wishing to vote for Deputy Tadier should press the contre button. Members may abstain if they wish in the usual way. I invite Members to return to their seats and ask the Greffier to open the voting. If all Members have had the opportunity of casting their votes then I ask the Greffier to close the voting. The votes cast were as follows: Deputy Miles at 25 votes, Deputy Tadier at 20 votes and no abstentions. I therefore declare Deputy Miles has been appointed as chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. **[Approval]**

Deputy H.M Miles of St. Brelade: 25		Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 20		ABSTAIN: 0
Connétable of St. Brelade		Connétable of St. Helier		
Connétable of St. John		Connétable of Trinity		
Connétable of St. Clement		Connétable of St. Peter		
Connétable of Grouville		Connétable of St. Martin		
Connétable of St. Mary		Connétable of St. Ouen		
Deputy S.G. Luce		Connétable of St. Saviour		
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet		Deputy G.P. Southern		
Deputy K.F. Morel		Deputy C.F. Labey		
Deputy S.M. Ahier		Deputy M. Tadier		
Deputy I. Gardiner		Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat		
Deputy I.J. Gorst		Deputy R.J. Ward		
Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf		Deputy C.S. Alves		
Deputy P.M. Bailhache		Deputy S.Y. Mézec		
Deputy D.J. Warr		Deputy T.A. Coles		
Deputy H.M. Miles		Deputy B.B.S.V.M. Porée		
Deputy M.R. Scott		Deputy C.D. Curtis		
Deputy J. Renouf		Deputy L.V. Feltham		
Deputy R.E. Binet		Deputy T.J.A. Binet		
Deputy H.L. Jeune		Deputy R.S. Kovacs		
Deputy A. Howell		Deputy B. Ward		
Deputy M.R. Ferey				
Deputy A.F. Curtis				
Deputy K.M. Wilson				
Deputy L.K.F Stephenson				
Deputy M.B. Andrews				

Connétable D. Johnson of St. Mary:

Sir, could I have a point of clarification? I note one of the voters was an Assistant Minister in Treasury. I wondered if he was allowed to vote.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Yes, it is simply the Ministers who are disabled from voting.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Sir, can I congratulate the new chair and wish all the best in the role?

4. Appointment of the Chair of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

The Deputy Bailiff:

We now move to the selection of the chair of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel. In accordance with Standing Order 120, the Assembly is due to appoint a new chair of that panel. In accordance with Standing Order 120(1B), the Chief Minister and the Ministers for Sustainable Economic Development, External Relations and International Development should neither nominate nor vote in relation to the appointment, although they are able to ask questions. I invite Members to make nominations for the chair of this panel.

Deputy H. Miles:

I would like to propose Deputy Jonathan Renouf.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you. Is that seconded? [**Seconded**].

Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

Can I nominate Deputy Montfort Tadier, please?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Is that seconded? [**Seconded**] In that case, Deputy Tadier, I am going to have to ask you to withdraw. This time we are going to give you time to catch your breath when you get back.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I might go for a walk.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Do not go for a run is my only advice. Deputy Renouf, you will now have 10 minutes to address the Assembly and then face up to 20 minutes of questions.

4.1 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:

Let me start with an observation, perhaps a difficult observation. In economic terms, Jersey has been in decline for more than 20 years. That may be tough for us to face but it is the truth. We have not managed to grow our economy in per capita terms, once you take inflation into account, since the turn of the century. Average earnings have also not grown since 2000. We have been kept afloat and continue to be kept afloat by the extraordinary performance of the finance sector, but even here productivity has declined. We face huge challenges in terms of an ageing population, labour supply issues and rising health costs, to name but a few. I make these points not to score points but to focus attention on the big challenge, and it is a big challenge. In fact, there is perhaps no greater challenge than rejuvenating our economy. We need a turnaround and that is going to take time, determination and collaboration. Our collective future depends on our ability to create more economic activity and do so in a way that is truly sustainable economically, environmentally and socially. Extraordinary times call for an extraordinary response. In terms of politics, the lead in that response must come from Government, of course, but I am sure the Minister and his Assistant Minister would acknowledge that neither they nor their department, nor even the whole Government, can solve these problems alone. We must all play our part in this Assembly and I would say particularly through Scrutiny. Interacting with our economic challenges are the complexities of our relations with the rest of the world. Since Brexit, we have found ourselves in a much more unstable international situation, which has posed challenges in terms of issues as varied as our labour supply, visitors from France

and export of fishing produce. The U.K. itself is still seeking a new role on the international stage and we are buffeted in the slipstream of this ongoing process. These are difficult waters for us to navigate. So much for the challenges, what of the role of Scrutiny and indeed the role of Scrutiny chair, in rising to these challenges? One good thing about this Scrutiny Panel is that it brings together the whole economy in its remit. Financial services, the rest of the economy, and to the considerable extent that both involve our relations with the outside world, it also includes international relations. It is, in other words, a remarkably coherent brief. The panel therefore starts from a position of strength. It has a complete overview of our economic situation. What can I bring to this role? It has been my privilege in researching my PhD, in my career as a TV producer, as a Minister and now, I hope, in Scrutiny to get under the hood of some of the great issues of the day. My job for 20 years in the BBC Science Department was to understand complex scientific concepts in order to communicate them. But in politics the responsibility is perhaps greater, mere understanding is not enough. It is also necessary to help find answers, to critically engage with the challenges we face and to help contribute to our collective response to those challenges. What kind of Scrutiny chair can Members expect, should I be elected? I aim to be collaborative, supportive and hard working. In particular, there are 2 skills that have sustained me through my working life. One, as already mentioned, is the ability to take complex information and understand it relatively quickly but, second, and perhaps most relevant in this context, to get the best out of those around me. Working in television and as a Minister is about teamwork. I have learned over time about the need to incorporate everyone into the team. I know I make mistakes, I get things wrong, but the great thing about teamwork is that you have people around you who can help. If elected, I know I will need to rely on my panel members to compensate for my deficiencies. Forging a team is about getting the best out of everyone so that collectively we are greater than the sum of our parts. In fact, I would go further, there is a joy in working together, whether that is with a creative team making television programmes, working with officers as a Minister or, I hope, on a Scrutiny Panel with fellow politicians and indeed with those members of the public who will also be contributing to the work of the panel. It does not always work out but when it does it is a lot of fun and that is what I will be aiming for. I would also say that I would aim very much to draw in relevant expertise and perspectives from our community, whether that is by inviting contributions to panel reports or by seeking to understand public views on particular matters that come before the panel. One other perspective I hope to bring to the work of Scrutiny chair is to consider, with other Scrutiny chairs, whether there are some pieces of work that would lend themselves to the setting up of separate review panels. One that immediately springs to mind, that is particularly close to my heart is, of course, the wind farm should that continue to be taken forward. But others might be the role of the A.L.O.s (arm's length organisations), which is likely to be in the spotlight given that the Comptroller and Auditor General is conducting her own review, and the work around Pillar Two in the financial services. A few more words on the issues that I believe will face the panel in the next couple of years. There is a significant legislative programme coming up. There are amendments to the telecoms law coming forward later this year. There is a law on cyber defence. There are amendments being planned to the tourism law, the competition law, heritage law and shipping law. In financial services, and overlapping with international relations, there is the legislation relating to Pillar Two and potential follow-up work to MONEYVAL. There will be much for the panel to get its teeth into but with such a full and wide-ranging programme of Ministerial activity to cover it will be important to focus on a few key areas. As to exactly what will be the focus of the panel's activity, I think it will be important to discuss this with panel members before coming to a definitive position. Framing all the Island's work on the economy, the future economy programme is a particularly important piece of work. Its focus on sustainable economic growth is vital and it provides a critically important lens through which to judge all our decision making around the economy, from the living wage to energy security to digital innovation. Because it is a long-term piece of work, it lends itself to the kind of consensus seeking approach to Scrutiny that I wish to champion.

[11.15]

We will not always agree, but my aim is to be as positive as I can in approaching these issues. I would like to close on a more upbeat note. I started by noting our poor relative economic performance since the turn of the century. However, the work of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel has the chance to play a central role in what is one of the defining projects this Island faces over the next 20 or 30 years, to rejuvenate our economy and redefine the Island's place in the world. My hope is that I can play my part in chairing a constructive, creative, collaborative panel that is able to provide positive challenge to the Government, holding to account where necessary but adding value where we can. Thank you.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy. We will now move up to 20 minutes of questions. The first question for Deputy Renouf is from Deputy Ozouf.

4.1.1 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

The candidate started his remarks saying that Jersey's economic growth had been lower than other places and he went on immediately to say one of the contributory factors - there are a number - was the rate of inflation and that the rate of inflation was high. Since I am no longer bound by only commenting on non-domestic matters and on my conscience for the people of St. Saviour I would be doing a disservice if I did not ask the candidate whether or not he was willing to get, as he says, his head under the bonnet of the issue of inflation and why it seems that Jersey's inflation rate is most definitely higher than it should be compared to other places, and to look forensically into why that is the case? I am talking about competition policy and all that.

Deputy J. Renouf:

I thank the Deputy for the question. He finishes by starting to answer the question for me, which is helpful. I think the question of competition in the Island is clearly an important one. We operate in a small Island economy and the tension that we have is that if we are not careful things fall into monopoly situations and we end up with an uncompetitive economy with too much leverage, pricing leverage, exercised by dominant operators. On the other hand, we also have in our pocket, if you like, the ability to regulate through the competition regulation and also through the control of A.L.O.s, where we can exercise control over dominant actors by ownership or other stakes in them. I think reviewing all of those things and how they interact together is certainly going to be important. I would say that we might want to consider that in the light of cost-of-living work that might also be done by Corporate Services. Exactly how we address those issues, I think I would like time to reflect along potentially with panel members, but certainly a very important area of work.

Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

I do not have a supplementary, just that I thank him for putting the importance of it because inflation is the silent killer. It is a thief and it is a big issue. I would urge him to confirm with absolute doubt that he will prioritise ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

We are asking questions so it is not appropriate.

4.1.2 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Will the candidate explain what, in his discussions with former panel members, he perceives to be the challenges in the work of the panel and will he be pursuing the recommendations of the panel regarding transparency?

Deputy J. Renouf:

Yes, I think the question of the remit of the panel and so on is something to definitely discuss. I highlighted in my speech the wide-ranging nature of the panel and it is very important to discuss with both the previous panel members and with the officer, as I already have, how we might focus that work and what we focus that work on. As I have indicated, I do not want to go too far into that at the moment, because I do think I would like the chance to discuss with fellow members of the panel exactly where we want to put our efforts, and indeed with other Scrutiny chairs, because I do think there is a job of work to be done in demarcating where the areas of focus should be.

4.1.3 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Is the candidate personally supportive of the panel's supply chain review work and would he have the intention, with the support of his fellow panel members, once appointed, of continuing that work?

Deputy J. Renouf:

Yes, I am aware of that review, which has been underway since June, I think it is. I think other Members have made the point that that it is important to finish pieces of work from Scrutiny. I do think therefore I would like to finish it. I would make the point, and others have made a similar one, in television when we finished films we always used to say they were abandoned rather than finished because you never really finished something. I think we have to apply the same principle to Scrutiny work, accepting that the work will never be completely finished to the satisfaction that we would like but that it is important to draw it to a close. My intention would be to understand more fully how much work has been done and how it can be brought to a close in a timely fashion.

4.1.4 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

The candidate mentioned in his speech a consultation with residents. How would he propose to reach out to residents for their opinions given his experience in the media?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I am not sure my experience in the media will help me in this regard but I think there are several things to think about. Two things to think about, perhaps. One is communication and maybe, I suppose, there is an element of the media work that would be relevant there. We do need to communicate the work of Scrutiny and I tried when I was a Minister to communicate through social media and so on, but I think we need to look at how we communicate. But also in terms of reaching out, I think we can be very specific in some areas in asking for public engagement with the work of a panel that could be done through commissioning survey work, it could be done through inviting direct contributions to the panel and so on. I think there are specific ways that we could do that that would mean that the public voice ... not just the public voice but I am thinking also in terms of key stakeholders when I am talking about the public in this context. So business, unions, other key stakeholders that we need to engage with in order to make sure that the work of a Scrutiny Panel is fully rounded.

4.1.5 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Does he intend improving the reach of social media to better get public feedback?

Deputy J. Renouf:

Yes, it is something that has slightly confounded me in the Ministerial position. We were sometimes asked, for example to put forward ... and, indeed, Members who were not Ministers were asked to record videos, for example, to promote a proposition that they were bringing or something and it struck me that it was not a particularly effective way of engaging. I think we need to find slightly more provocative, slightly more engaging ways of suggesting to the public what it is we are doing, not here is a proposition or here is a piece of Scrutiny work but a provocative question about the

piece of work that we are doing that does not frame it in terms of the States Assembly business but it frames it in terms of the concerns that matter to the public. I think if we can do that then social media can work for us, but expecting social media to work for us in the context of: “Here is a video that we have recorded about our proposition” or about our Scrutiny work I do not think is the way forward.

4.1.6 Deputy L. Stephenson:

I am sure all Members will be really surprised with what I am about to ask. How would the candidate manage conflicts of interest should they arise during the work chairing the panel?

Deputy J. Renouf:

Yes, looking at the minutes of previous meetings and so on, I think it is the second item on the agenda for the panel. I would echo the point that was made earlier that we need to think about conflicts of interest in a slightly broader context in Jersey. I do think that we should be talking, and I do not just include Scrutiny Panels in this but in terms of Government as a whole, we should be acknowledging more the social relationships that underpin our lives that can have an impact. They do not necessarily rule us out from doing anything. They do not stop us from asking questions or voting but for the transparency purposes, I think it is important that people know where we are coming from in the fullest possible sense. I would be engaging in a discussion with panel members along that along those lines.

4.1.7 Deputy L. Stephenson:

Would the candidate support some training for Scrutiny Panel members on conflict of interest?

Deputy J. Renouf:

Yes, I think that is something I would look into along with other training actually, because certainly I come to this without experience of Scrutiny. I may have covered the U.K. Parliament on “Newsnight” for many years but that was a long time ago, things have moved on, and I am sure that I also need to bring myself up to speed. In terms of the conflicts of interest, yes, I think I also note that the Commissioner for Standards is doing a review of her terms of reference at the moment with P.P.C. and I think it would be interesting to be feeding into that broader discussion.

4.1.8 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

What is the Deputy’s view on the way arm’s length organisations operate and are being financed by the Government?

Deputy J. Renouf:

Is that one minute 30 I have for this, in terms of the answer to a single question?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Effectively, yes.

Deputy J. Renouf:

Yes. It is a big subject the Deputy asks about. My view is that the arm’s length organisations are potentially, and generally are, a huge source of strength for this Island. If you have lived in the U.K. and seen, for example, the mess that has been made of social housing in the U.K. and compare it with what we have with Andium then you can quickly appreciate the strength of that model that we have here. We have a very varied set of arm’s length organisations here so to answer that question in the generality is quite hard. I think there are some relationships that work better with Government than with others but the key overarching point I would make is I think we need to be seen to be more interventionist ... I hinted at this in questions to candidates for Ministerial positions, we need to be

more interventionist and more assertive in making clear what it is that we want from the arm's length organisations so that they have clarity around that.

4.1.9 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

Would the candidate intend to launch a review into the arm's length organisations?

Deputy J. Renouf:

That is one of the 3 things that I think, in my own mind, are quite high up the list of priorities, because the Comptroller and Auditor General is already committed to doing that work, to doing a piece of work on the A.L.O.s. It is a big piece of work that she has planned for this year and it would seem to me interesting to find out what the scope of that is and what the space might be for Scrutiny to be involved with that, to make sure we do not duplicate but to be complementary. I think this is clearly a moment for us, the work, the Auditor General has created a moment where we can review those arm's-length organisations in detail, reset where we want them to go. I think that it would therefore make sense certainly for the Economic and International Affairs Panel to take a role in that. Whether it is done as a separate review panel maybe in co-operation with Corporate Services, I think we would have to wait and see.

4.1.10 Deputy R.J. Ward:

I would like to ask the Deputy a question that was asked of me in my constituency drop-in. This Assembly has been through a difficult time recently and it was bound to have left some scars on people. I would like to ask the Deputy how he would ensure that Scrutiny will not be used as a simple opposition to a new Government, given the activity we have been through, because this was what was asked of me last night.

Deputy J. Renouf:

I would approach Scrutiny, I hope, with the sort of professionalism that I have approached most things in my life. I would draw attention to the fact that I was on "Newsnight" for 6 or 7 years when the separation between analysis and understanding, on the one hand, and interpretation and how you might respond to something, on the other, were very clearly part of my working life and, in fact, became part of my D.N.A. So, I think the ability for me to understand the difference between the professional job of work that is required by Scrutiny and my own personal politics or anything else to do with me personally, I think - I would hope - Members would recognise that that is perfectly within my competence.

4.1.11 Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I ask the Deputy whether he expects and believes that all Members of this Assembly are capable of doing exactly that, i.e., to give you a good choice of members for your Scrutiny Panel?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I can happily agree with the Deputy and I would take the opportunity to say that, while I will not be suggesting any names for the panel, were I to be elected today, I would be very much encouraging Members to come and talk to me.

[11:30]

I would be very keen to hear from a very diverse set of views. As I made clear in my speech, I am committed to that idea of plurality of views and I would look forward to working with a wide range of people, not least because I think you learn a lot yourself.

4.1.12 Deputy I. Gardiner:

There are 5 positions for the chairs of Scrutiny Panels and the Public Accounts Committee available today. Would the Deputy explain why he decided to stand for the position specifically of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel and what skills he would bring to the table?

Deputy J. Renouf:

That is a good question. I think maybe some people might have expected me to jump at the opportunity of standing for the Environment Panel. I think when you come new to the Assembly you obviously focus initially on the thing that is your greatest passion, I suppose, and that is what I did. But I have always been of the view that the environment is part of the economy and I was very, very keen in my role as Minister to focus on the economic side of that job as well. It interacts all across the portfolio. I have a very long-standing interest in the economy. I am sure there are many Members who followed my newspaper columns before I was elected avidly, and they will have seen that I wrote frequently about the economy. So for me it feels like a very natural thing to do, to move into this area, and particularly I think because of the Ministerial and Government focus on sustainability within that economic portfolio; not just sustainability in environmental terms, but sustainability in the full sense of the word. So I find it a really, really exciting area and the skills I bring to it, I hope I went through some of those in my speech. I think the key skill is that team work, team building skill, and trying to get the best out of people and that, I hope, I can bring something to the table.

4.1.13 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Could the candidate explain what he hopes to be able to achieve by the end of the term to the outcomes by 2026?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I think, yes, I can certainly hope that we will produce a number of Scrutiny reports. I would say I do not particularly want to put a number around my neck and leave it as a target to hit. It depends to some extent on how we divide the work up. The scale of a review might be one or 2 large ones, it might be made up of a number of smaller ones. For example, we might want to look at Digital Jersey and the Impact Jersey fund as a small discrete piece of work; we might find several of those pieces of work. Equally we might find that we are working in collaboration with other Scrutiny Panels. I think the key thing is that we can work at pace to produce reports that are produced within a relatively short space of time. I would certainly not want to ever spend more than 6 months on one, we should be producing work at pace and making it relevant, otherwise we risk that perpetual going on and on and on, just as I am doing now in my answer, so I will shut up.

4.1.14 The Connétable of St. Mary:

The candidate has correctly described or referred to the broad responsibilities imposed on this panel. With a view to maximising output of the panel, and depending on the composition of his panel, would he consider giving the lead to individual panel members on certain subjects much as they do with Select Committees at Westminster?

Deputy J. Renouf:

Yes, that is a very interesting and good idea. I think when I have worked in teams in the past, the greatest pleasure you get is when you see somebody take a piece of work and run with it and make something of it. Often you have very little input in that other than recognising that that is a possibility, and so I would say that that is something I would definitely hope to do. It feeds into that agenda which I feel very strongly about, which is that everybody should feel rewarded in their work. Everybody should feel like they are getting something positive out of it and they should feel that they are being enabled to do good work and so, where appropriate, that feels like a very good idea.

4.1.15 Deputy A. Howell:

Please can the Minister explain how he will listen to the views of all members of the public, even if he may feel such views to be irrelevant?

Deputy J. Renouf:

It is not quite the Minister, I am afraid. That is something which I think I alluded to slightly earlier in terms of the different ways in which we can sample public opinion. We can sample public opinion through structured surveys, through inviting members of the public, of relevant organisations to attend upon the committee to submit evidence to the committee. I do not have any problem at all in dealing with views that might be contrary to mine, and indeed the work of Scrutiny chair, it is less relevant what my views are in any case.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you very much, Deputy Renouf, that brings the period of questions to an end. I invite you now to withdraw and for the return of Deputy Tadier.

The Deputy Greffier of the States (in the Chair):

Very well, Deputy, do you have your riff?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Thank you, different Sir. **[Laughter]** Well, are we quorate? I hope we are quorate.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

If the speaker is himself part of the quorum, we are, but otherwise not, I think.

4.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

I take it that I am addressing those who have not yet made up their minds but there may be others that are meeting in the coffee room and listening from there. Have you ever been to Glencoe? By the way, Glencoe, that famous auction place in St. Lawrence. You go up there and you may be looking for a fridge or a vacuum cleaner, and there are 2 that are put together because that is what they do. They have done all the bits outside, they have sold the cars, they have sold all the bits of granite, they have sold the ploughs, and then you go inside and you see the white goods. You see 2 lots of fridges, pretty much identical, slightly different, and the auctioneer says: "We have got this great fridge, it is all-singing, all-dancing" and you bid on it and you just miss out by £5; someone bids £5 more than you. Then he says: "We have got this fridge, much better than the last one." Of course because the other person who has been bidding on it has been knocked out, you get it slightly cheaper and you tell yourself: "That is the one I really wanted" and the auctioneer winks at you, Sir. I am not suggesting you are ... oh, he has changed. **[Laughter]** I am not suggesting you are the auctioneer, Sir, or there are any nods or winks going on in here but let us get this back to basics. I am not going to stand here and give you the same 10-minute speech that I did before. I would like it that you take that for read and I am going to speak more from the heart than from the head. Now I have spent time preparing that last night and there were probably things I could have included that I did not; there were things that maybe I did include which I could have cut out but let us bring this back to the Assembly. It is fundamental that any of the roles that we are choosing today are functions of this Assembly. It is very interesting that from my side we receive lots of questions about: "How on earth is Reform going to perform its job if you are in a party?" and I do not know why that is relevant. What I would say is that I have been very proud of the way that my colleagues in Reform have handled themselves over the last 2 years in their Scrutiny functions. But I have also been proud of those non-Reform Members who have led Scrutiny Panels and who have also been working hard in P.A.C. and across the Benches. I would ask the Assembly to think very carefully about what it is that they wish Scrutiny to look like in the future. Because the question is not whether you can take

off your party political hat and do Scrutiny objectively, the question is do we simply want to populate the new Scrutiny Panels with old Ministers who have just been kicked out? Let me speak frankly here. They have got their own experience, do we simply want it to be a rerun of what some people think happened between 2018 and 2022 where there were elements of political motivation where you have a head of Scrutiny Liaison who does not agree with and does not like potentially the current Chief Minister and personality politics creeps in. Because there is one thing that is much more toxic than having political differences in a manifesto, it is having personal differences and, to coin a new phrase, is perhaps there is nothing so bad as a Minister spurned. I am not suggesting that that is the case for any of the Ministers who are putting themselves forward but that is a definite risk for Scrutiny. Now let me turn to why I am also interested in the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel. Again, this is not just a second choice, it so happens that Corporate Services is called first, Economic Affairs called second. There is a key difference of course. Corporate Services has to scrutinise, for example, the whole of the Government Plan so where other departments scrutinise their own Ministers directly, Corporate Services need to do more. So clearly the Assembly thinks that I am not as best placed as somebody else to do that job but I hope that the Assembly would consider me for the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel. I will of course wait for questions but one of the key areas that I would like to highlight that I think the current Minister needs to be congratulated on, and I hope he will continue with the support of his 2 new Assistant Ministers, is the increasing work that is being done with France. So, the Minister is proactively continuing work of previous administrations, building stronger links with the region of Normandy, the Département de la Meuse, and also looking away automatically from the U.K. for all of our trade and commercial links to the Région de Normandie and hopefully Brittany. There is also a piece of work going on in the future economy programme that is looking at educational links with Caen, with Rennes, with those business schools over there. I fundamentally think it would be a useful thing if you had a chair leading the Economic and International Affairs Panel who is very conversant, not just with the language of French, but also the culture and some of the personalities that are out there, not because I will be meeting them but because I will know exactly what it is that the Minister and his department are having to do in that regard. There will no doubt be other areas. I mentioned in a previous speech that when the O.E.C.D. Pillar Two review comes forward, it will be necessary for both Corporate Services and my panel, if I am successful in this, to work collaboratively together, and I look forward to doing that with the former Minister for Justice and Home Affairs in her new role. I am going to cut the speech short there to give Members time to come back in and to think about questions they may want to ask me. What I would ask is that I sometimes feel you cannot do right for doing wrong in this Assembly. If on the one hand you stand up and say: "Look, I have got all of this political experience, I have done Scrutiny in so many different iterations, I have learnt so much over that period of time in that process, and I feel that 15 years later I am the better person for it. I have changed, I am more sensitive to the needs of Scrutiny, and I can do it excellently" you might be saying: "You are entitled, do you think we are automatically going to give you that job?" By no means, I do not take this Assembly for granted. On the other hand, you could be a Minister who has just come in, who has recently been elected and appointed for the first time as a Minister, you have never done Scrutiny before, you find yourself kicked out of Government, and then you say: "What jobs are available? I would like to go for a Scrutiny chair", similarly bringing a different level of experience from perhaps a past professional background but with no Scrutiny experience, and other Members will say: "You are entitled." So, first of all, let us congratulate all those Members who have put themselves forward. I would hope that Members elect the chairs on merit, not simply on some party-political basis but let us see what comes from questions.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy. We now have up to 20 minutes of questions. The first one from Deputy Scott.

[11:45]

4.2.1 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Could the candidate please say whether he has any intention to carry forward the work of the panel with respect to transparency and to look at its recommendations in that respect?

Deputy M. Tadier:

The Member will have heard my opening speech in the last debate, so to speak, where I put transparency and evidence-based approaches at the fundamental level. Clearly, if there are elements where she thinks previous departments have not been fully transparent, then I would certainly look to continue that and follow-up on that review, if necessary.

4.2.2 Deputy M.R. Scott:

What is the candidate's position with respect to the panel's supply chain review? Would he consider continuing it with the support of his fellow panel members and looking into the viability of both the southern and northern route in terms of overall volumes?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think the new Assistant Minister has really touched on something fundamental there, is that our vulnerability to the weather and to disruption in the supply chain is fundamental. Clearly, if the Minister is looking to establish stronger links which are more resilient, then my job as a Scrutiny chair would be to make sure that we see that the Minister can achieve those objectives effectively by giving proper and constructive feedback to achieve those objectives.

4.2.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Would the candidate outline his intended outcomes by 2026? So what does the candidate hope to achieve by the end of his term?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Again, I remind the Member that I am not the Minister and I should not seek to be the Minister. So my outcomes will be make sure that Government objectives, especially when they have been endorsed by this Assembly, are being achieved, that they are being done with due process and that they are achieving the outcomes that they seek to achieve. I think that is a process where you have to monitor in real time but also you have to monitor it once the policy has come to fruition.

4.2.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Can the candidate specifically say some of the areas under the Scrutiny Panel that has happened, recently launched by the Minister, that he could think of to bring to review, for example?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Well where do we start? Condor is one of the first things. We have heard that there have been issues there with correspondence from Condor that the Minister forgot to advise the Assembly about. There is also Condor is a monopoly in Jersey and I think it is really important that when that contract comes up for renewal we look at all options and that we are open-minded to building in that resilience for the future. But also things like the future economy programme, it is a perennial issue about sustainability but also diversification of the economy, Digital Jersey. Also I am very interested in this new project that is coming about to do with potentially creating a university for Jersey for student economy in Jersey, and what that means for both local students, and a potential for encouraging young people to come to this Island to study but then hopefully to stay and also to work. So those are areas which I think will keep me and the panel busy.

4.2.5 The Connétable of St. Mary:

I will ask the candidate the same question I asked of the previous candidate. The brief covered by this panel is quite extensive. Would the candidate if successful, and depending on the composition and expertise available to him through other members, consider giving the lead on certain subjects to other members to enable optimum output of the panel, which I believe is the situation that applies at Westminster?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes, I thank the Constable for that question. We have worked together on a panel, I think I have worked under different chairs, and I think that is not done enough. Scrutiny Panels have got the ability to set up sub-panels and to co-opt Members and to also give members of their panel the ability to chair sub-panels. So you cannot co-opt someone from a different panel, I do not think, and ask them to chair, but I think it is really important that we value the expertise of all panel members. Clearly, there is an officer involved as well and you can draft in advisers as and when we need them to be brought in. So, absolutely, the answer is yes to that.

4.2.6 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

I will ask the same question like the other candidate. What is the Deputy's view on the way the arm's-length organisation operate and their finance by the Government?

Deputy M. Tadier:

There are quite a lot of arm's-length organisations that come under this remit and the Ministers' remits. So, for example, I am very familiar with the ones that relate to culture and arts, but there are also the likes of the States of Jersey Development Company; I have not forgotten to call it the States of Jersey Development Company. I know the Constable of St. Lawrence will be pleased with me for that. There is Andium, and I think we need to look at all of those, because they are different entities and one size does not always fit all. If I can focus very quickly on States of Jersey Development Company and Andium, you see one body there which is a social housing provider, which provides revenue back to the Assembly, and you have got to ask questions I think in the round about efficiency and effectiveness about all of those A.L.O.s, what they are there to do, are they delivering? If we think that there are changes that need to be made in the framework that they operate, we should not be afraid of recommending that to the Minister if it is evidence-based.

4.2.7 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

Would the candidate intend to launch a review on the A.L.O.s?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I have not made any hard-and-fast decision about what reviews. I would be open to doing that if the evidence is there. If members of the panel believe that there is merit in doing that, then I think that is an area where I would be quite comfortable. It will be a big piece of work so it might need to be broken down into certain sectors in a piecemeal approach, or rather an iterative approach, I would say, but certainly I would be open to that.

4.2.8 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Could the candidate explain what skills and experience he would look to secure in terms of the membership of this panel?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think we are lucky in this Assembly, we often do ourselves down, is that there are 49 of us who bring both life experience, work experience and experience in this Assembly, and I think we have to recognise all of that. So I would look, as I have said in a previous speech, to get a cross-section of

Members. First of all, you want people on your panel who want to be on your panel and you want people who feel that they can work with you under your leadership, but knowing that being a leader of a panel is to bring out the best in all of your panel members. On a day-to-day basis you do that by making sure everyone is involved in questioning and delegating leads for different reviews and different questioning seminars to different members.

4.2.9 Deputy G.P. Southern:

I will ask the question I asked previously of the previous candidate: what constitutes productivity in Scrutiny terms and how would the candidate propose measuring?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think quality always has to come before quantity but similarly I would be very suspicious if there was a Scrutiny Panel which is not producing many reports. Like I said, in the early days of my involvement in Scrutiny, I think we were fairly prolific. You have short, focused hearings, you know what you are trying to achieve, you get the evidence that you need from all the stakeholders, you synthesise and scrutinise those results into obviously findings and recommendations. I think the key is to not let meetings go on any longer than they need to but make sure that everybody has the chance to say everything they need to on both sides of the table.

4.2.10 Deputy M.B. Andrews:

I would like the candidate to express his personal view on the supply chain resilience review that the previous iteration of the Economic and International Affairs Panel were responsible for. As Scrutiny is responsible for scrutinising Ministers, what is his view on the panel conducting that review when it is an arm's-length organisation that is essentially responsible for the supply chain resilience impact for the Island moving forward and whether he would maybe express his opinion on whether the review might be closed or if it may be potentially continued?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Could I ask for clarification? What A.L.O. is he talking about that is responsible for the supply chain?

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Ports of Jersey.

Deputy M. Tadier:

As I touched on earlier to Deputy Scott's question, I think I would be happy to continue that piece of work. I will look at where it has got to, I will speak to the officer and previous members of the panel. I believe that the current questioner is a member of that panel, or he was, and he knows about that, and look to continue that if it needs to be done. Our supply chains are of fundamental importance to Jersey. I think the way that we allocate responsibility through A.L.O.s is just the way it has been chosen to be delivered. There are many methods that could have been chosen. I would not seek to impose a new methodology but I think it is important that we make sure that all of our A.L.O.s, Ports of Jersey included, are delivering the outcomes that they have been set by this Assembly and the Government.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Any further questions for Deputy Tadier? In that case this series of questions is brought to a close and I invite Deputy Renouf to return to the Chamber. **[Members: Oh!] [Laughter]**

Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

A point of order, that is not a fineable offence, is it? **[Laughter]**

The Deputy Bailiff:

No, it is not.

Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

Is the candidate forgiven?

The Deputy Bailiff:

There is no financial penalty.

Deputy J. Renouf:

I apologise. I would just like to say that I did check with my escort before I came in via that route but having noticed that Deputy Tadier was delayed, I thought I would be quicker, but I apologise.

The Deputy Bailiff:

There we are, he was testing you. As there are 2 candidates, the electronic voting system shall be used. Any Member wishing to vote for Deputy Renouf should press the pour button; any Member voting for Deputy Tadier should press the contre button. Members of course may abstain in the usual way. I invite Members to return to their seats and the Greffier to open the voting. If all Members have had the opportunity of casting their votes, then I ask the Greffier to close the voting. The votes cast are as follows ... sorry?

Deputy L.J. Farnham of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

I am just confirming that I am unable to vote in this one.

The Deputy Bailiff:

You are unable to vote, yes. Deputy Renouf 17 votes; Deputy Tadier 24 votes and one abstention. I therefore declare Deputy Tadier has been elected as Chair of that panel. **[Approbation]**

Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade: 17	Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 24	ABSTAIN: 1
Connétable of St. Martin	Connétable of St. Helier	Deputy M.R. Scott
Connétable of St. John	Connétable of St. Brelade	
Connétable of St. Mary	Connétable of Trinity	
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet	Connétable of St. Peter	
Deputy S.M. Ahier	Connétable of St. Clement	
Deputy I. Gardiner	Connétable of Grouville	
Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf	Connétable of St. Ouen	
Deputy Sir P.M. Bailhache	Connétable of St. Saviour	
Deputy D.J. Warr	Deputy G.P. Southern	
Deputy H.M. Miles	Deputy M. Tadier	
Deputy J. Renouf	Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat	
Deputy H.L. Jeune	Deputy R.J. Ward	
Deputy M.E. Millar	Deputy C.S. Alves	
Deputy M.R. Ferey	Deputy S.Y. Mézec	
Deputy A.F. Curtis	Deputy T.A. Coles	
Deputy K.M. Wilson	Deputy B.B.de S.V.M. Porée	
Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson	Deputy C.D. Curtis	
	Deputy L.V. Feltham	

		Deputy R.E. Binet		
		Deputy A. Howell		
		Deputy T.J.A. Binet		
		Deputy R.S. Kovacs		
		Deputy B. Ward		
		Deputy M.B. Andrews		

5. Appointment of the Chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel

The Deputy Bailiff:

In accordance with Standing Order 120 the Assembly is due to appoint a new chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel. In accordance with Standing Order 120(1D) the Ministers for the Environment, Housing and Communities and Infrastructure should neither nominate nor vote in relation to this appointment although they may ask questions.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I would just like the opportunity to nominate Deputy Jeune for this position.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Is that seconded? [**Seconded**] Are there any other nominations? Deputy Jeune, you now have up to 10 minutes to address the Assembly.

5.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I would first like to thank the current panel for their contributions this term, knowing that the majority are now in Government roles, and I look forward to working with some of them that interact with this role. I seek support for my candidacy as chair of this panel because I believe I could bring to this role a robust work ethic, critical analytical skills and a collaborative approach. I will lead the panel to produce work of quality and the type of constructive scrutiny that improves policy and its application, crucial for good governance. Although a newcomer to this position, my extensive experience will feed into the qualities needed for making this role effective. I have experience chairing complex environments from chairing the past Government of Jersey's Future Energies Ministerial Working Group, working with 6 Ministers and senior officers to leading diverse civil society groups from across the global north and global south, uniting the varied perspectives into singular positions to be presented at either U.N. (United Nations) or E.U. (European Union) negotiations, for example, during the Financing for Development agenda process where U.N. members were part of complex negotiations on the utilisation of private and public funds from taxation grants, concessional loans to enhancing trade resolving the debt crisis and utilising guarantees to attract private finance. I also led a diverse group of non-governmental organisations in monitoring and scrutinising sections of the E.U.'s budget and the multi-financial framework. Policy commitments are essential but without sufficient funding realising these commitments becomes nearly impossible. Supporting non-governmental organisations and business associations, my leadership focus on assuring we scrutinised Government's implementation of international and regional agreements in legislation provided evidence-based reports to highlight areas of concern, supported impacted stakeholders bringing their voices and experiences to decision-makers and provided specific recommendations to complex policy agendas. Another area I worked on in Brussels was scrutinising policy coherence to ensure there were synergies towards achieving agreed objectives across the European Commission. For this panel especially, the 3 Ministers will need to work together to ensure policy coherence. Currently there is a network of problems that need negotiation and resolution. The panel will be able to monitor that overview and how Ministers work

together to unpick these big problems quickly, properly, coherently and safely. Currently as chair of J.A.Y.F. (Jersey Association of Youth and Friendship), Jersey's youth homelessness charity, I guide the organisation through navigating complexities in providing subsidised social housing, facilitating young adults access to government support for various needs including housing, education, employment and healthcare and breaking barriers to independent living. As you can see, I have experience holding power to account but continuous learning is paramount and I value the opportunities provided by the C.P.A. and the Greffe to enhance my skills. It will always be important to learn from and work well with the panel's Scrutiny officer who has vast experience in the role of Scrutiny, and I also hope to build an effective, inclusive and diverse team that can support me in ensuring I deliver the role effectively, and at this stage I welcome Members to contact me who are interested in joining the panel. Part of Scrutiny's function is to get data, information, consulting and collating evidence. Therefore, to do this well it will be important to build relations with stakeholders as Scrutiny is the space they can come to to raise concerns, request a specific focus on Government Plans and Ministers' priorities and feel listened to. Building relations with the 3 Ministers as well as the Minister for Treasury and Resources and their officers will be essential to enhance open and respectful relationships. I have met with the Scrutiny officer already to understand where the panel was in its forward work programme and what is needed going forward. A few key areas to mention, but of course this could change, the first job will be for the newly-formed panel to come together and reassess and decide together the work programme in light of the new Government and Ministerial priorities. Scoping for the Marine Spatial Plan review is currently underway and after the panel hears from the Minister and officers on any amendments to the direction of travel or timeline, I will suggest to the panel that we should evaluate if the scoping and terms of reference needs amending. The panel is waiting on the publication of the consultation and the proposed Residential Tenancy Law amendments. Regarding the consultation, it will be important for the panel to engage with stakeholders to assess whether there was a balanced representation of the different stakeholders' inputs, that the right information was asked for in a timely manner, and that submissions were properly taken into account. I noted that the Minister for the Environment in his speech was wanting to expediate a renewed energy strategy which could be a key part of the panel's work down the line, and part of this would be further developments on the wind farm. Here I believe there needs to be a more collaborative approach across Scrutiny Panels and with the Executive and I would be happy to explore what type of mechanisms can be developed for this. The delivery of the Carbon Neutral Roadmap should remain a priority for the panel, especially noting the Minister described a refocus in his speech and with a need to expediate the long-term financing strategy. This is also an example of policy coherence where the Carbon Neutral Roadmap falls into 2, if not all 3 Ministers' remit. We have of course heard from all 3 Ministers regarding the planning process and the need for finding sites for more affordable housing. I foresee the panel redirecting some of the work programme to focus more in this area as the Council of Ministers' plans in this area progress. The panel is waiting for Ministers' responses on the liquid waste strategy review, an area I am sure the panel would want to continue to monitor, especially as this is one of the hurdles to the delivery of more affordable housing. The panel is also waiting for 2 of the Ministers' responses on the Government Plan, and there are a number of areas identified there that could be monitored by the new panel in 2024, depending on the new focus and strategic direction of the new Government. Added to this, there is a need for developing more longer-term financing strategies for a number of key priority workstreams and projects namely, I have already said the Climate Emergency Fund, but also the liquid waste charging, shoreline management plan coastal adaptation projects, maintenance and investment in the public estate and the water strategy. I would work with the panel on how we can monitor these developments and where our specific focus could be. Looking forward, some other key areas that do pique my interest would be the implementation of the sustainable transport strategy, the homelessness strategy and the impact of changes to the Affordable Gateway scheme and how the Government works with the J.P.H. (Jersey Property Holdings) and S.o.J.D.C. (States of Jersey Development Company). The panel may also consider reviewing how the Government is preparing for the first

review of the U.K.-E.U. T.C.A. (Trade and Co-operation Agreement) in 2026, particularly concerning its impact on our fisheries. It is important to put the last month behind us and work together to get stuff done effectively and with a positive impact for the Jersey community and our environment. I know we are all proud of Jersey as a place of outstanding beauty. We must protect it but to do this we need cohesive policies that work together, a balance for providing affordable homes for Islanders, workplaces for businesses and essential infrastructure, all while responsibly managing our scarce resources of our land, our sea and our coastline. I would therefore like to ask the Assembly to support me to scrutinise all this vital work as a critical friend.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy Jeune. There are now up to 20 minutes of questions and the first question is from the Connétable of St. Brelade.

5.1.1 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

The existing T.C.A. came about as a result of protracted negotiations with the U.K. and particularly Brussels. The candidate referred to her experience in Brussels and its associated quagmire of administration with which we have had to deal. How would she view the 2026 T.C.A. being discussed to the benefit of our fishing fleet?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Connétable for his question. I really think this is a difficult one to answer because it really depends I think on the U.K. Government, and potentially there will be a new Government in place in 2026, and how they foresee this review as well. I know that there have been discussions, for example, about the E.U. focusing maybe more on an energy supply rather than on fisheries, and so therefore maybe their eyes will be taken into another area than the fishery and that could be of benefit for Jersey to help discuss. But of course it is a review, it is not a necessary renegotiation, and so that is up for the U.K. and the E.U. to make that decision when it comes to that moment.

5.1.2 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Will the candidate confirm her support of Jersey's fishing industry in the reviews that she undertakes?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Absolutely. Of course, I absolutely support Jersey's fishery in this regard.

5.1.3 Deputy L. Stephenson:

How would the candidate manage conflicts of interest should they arise during her work chairing the panel?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

It is no surprise that I think my answer will be very similar to the others who have gone before me but of course the code of conduct is clear and this is something that I will hold myself and the panel to account on. I have always done this as a Member of this Assembly as well but it is important that again it is a standing item on the agenda and it is given that due attention every time that the panel would meet. I know Deputy Miles and Deputy Renouf have mentioned about a wider discussion beyond the panels but within this Assembly, about bringing forward discussions on personal relationships and how we can deal with that as an Assembly around the code of conduct but of course that is specifically for the Assembly and not potentially for this specific Scrutiny Panel.

5.1.4 Deputy L. Stephenson:

Would the Member support training for Scrutiny Panel members on conflict of interest?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Yes, absolutely. I think the Commissioner for Standards also develops her role and we see how that works for Jersey. I think it is important that we also all look for retraining in this area and see where there are elements where we could seek to enhance our training in that aspect.

5.1.5 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Aside from her Assistant Minister role, has the candidate had any direct engagement with the planning process as a third party or in the bridging Island Plan consultation to help inform her in her new role and to help her empathise with those who find them problematic?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Deputy for her question. I have for a number of years been an elected member of the Comité Rurale for St. John. The Comité Rurale is a constituted committee in the Parish of St. John to specifically look at proposals and planning decisions in St. John. I was very much a part of that discussion when the bridging Island Plan was being negotiated and helped develop some submissions into that.

5.1.6 Deputy M.R. Scott:

With respect to the oncoming Island Plan review, one element that is important to the economy is of course the impact on ... I am going to start that question again because I think it is too rambling. Sorry about that. With respect to the current bridging Island Plan, its emphasis very much on environmental areas, will the candidate be mindful of the gaps in process regarding economic development and does she propose to involve her Scrutiny Panel more closely in economic development issues as well?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Deputy for her question. I think that will be important for the panel, as the Island Plan is launched, that the review invites a number of stakeholders to come and bring their experiences of engaging with the bridging Island Plan and that would include, of course, businesses who are interacting with that bridging Island Plan, so that would be important to gather that evidence base of those who have already been engaging with the bridging Island Plan as a starter in this regard. That is a very important part of any Island Plan, to bring the economy in that regard.

[12:15]

5.1.7 Deputy C.F. Labey:

Will the Deputy undertake to consult with the local fishing industry over the Marine Spatial Plan?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Deputy for her question. Absolutely, as part of the Marine Spatial Plan review that would be the first thing that we would look at, not only, as I said in my speech, reviewing the scoping that has currently been drafted and make sure that that fits within what the new Minister and the Council of Ministers would feel the timeline and the content of it would be, but to also listen from the different stakeholders that are affected by the Marine Spatial Plan to hear how they feel about it. Of course, the consultation has already been happening and, as I said in my speech, it will be important to also hear from stakeholders how they felt that consultation went as well because that can also feed into how the panel responds to it in the review.

5.1.8 Deputy M. Tadier:

So when it comes to renewable energy, does the candidate have a view about what she anticipates coming forward in terms of policy and legislation and when she might expect the panel to start reviewing that?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think that really depends on the new Minister and the priorities that are put forward. I know we have the proposition from the Council of Ministers still tabled for the wind farm, and so this is one particular area of renewable energy that will be there. But of course, as the Minister in his nomination speech suggested, there needs to be an energy strategy that comes fast to the Assembly. That would be important to review as a whole and look at all the different elements of renewable energy that the Island could potentially generate.

5.1.9 Deputy M. Tadier:

Would the candidate also be interested in looking at different models of ownership when it comes to the infrastructure of renewable energy in the future and what would she see as the role of the Scrutiny Panel to play in that particular decision?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Deputy for his question and it is a very interesting question. I think that, as the Scrutiny Panel is there to scrutinise, it is important that we hear from the Minister and how they feel about the alternative ownership structures that are available. There are some very interesting examples coming out of the U.K. at the moment in that regard but also it is very important that we listen to stakeholders. So of course we would invite those who are providing our energy in Jersey to talk us through those in particular, and if there are any that come with those alternative models and examples and show us as a panel that they could potentially be done here, then we obviously are there to listen.

5.1.10 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

I ask a question because there is another question coming forward. The Assistant Minister was a very highly-respected Assistant Minister and had to make some difficult decisions, one of which was challenged by a Royal Court judgment. I have read that and it did make a number of observations. In her discharging of Scrutiny, and in the spirit that we always need to learn from the decisions - and if you have never made a decision, you have never made a mistake - has the candidate learnt something from that experience as an Assistant Minister and take that into Scrutiny? Because I think she knows what I am saying, I do not want to ...

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you for the question. Of course, as I said in my speech, continuous learning is something that I find is very important. Of course, the Scrutiny Panel will be a team and I am hoping that a diverse and cross-section of this Assembly will join me. I hope therefore they will then hold me to account and hold me up as a leader in how the chair should be in discharging their duties. But I think that specific decision was something to show that I have a decision, I made the decision, I still stand by that decision, and ultimately the Court, if we boil it down, said that there was not enough information provided. I would have been happy to have provided that more information but circumstances meant that I made the decision to withdraw. Again, I hope that the Assembly sees that I can make difficult decisions and stand by my decisions but happy to also very much consult with my team and make sure that we are doing anything as a panel together which will be important for my team going forward.

Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

I am grateful for the candidate's answer.

5.1.11 Deputy M. Tadier:

The previous Minister for the Environment said in his personal election manifesto that he thought the role of planning and environment should be split. Does the future chair of this panel believe that there is any merit in doing perhaps a pre-emptive Scrutiny review on to how the roles of planning

and environment sit with one person and one Minister and whether that in fact serves the best interests of the public?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Deputy for his question, and it is a really interesting question, and one that I know has been discussed in the past Council of Ministers, and I am sure in this one as well. I think the first thing for me to do would be to talk to the panel members and decide what kind of reviews we should do. As I have outlined, there is a lot to do and review in this particular panel and so we need to make sure we can prioritise. As the Deputy himself said earlier, it is about quality, not quantity, and so I think it is really important that we sit down as a team, as a panel, with the Scrutiny officer and after talking with Ministers, to really see what are the real needs for the Island and then go from there. So I would not want to put a definite on that particular one but I will take that into account, and his thoughts into account, when we take that to the panel.

4.1.12 Deputy M. Tadier:

It is not a supplementary but it is a different question if there are no other Members ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

Another question then, yes.

Deputy M. Tadier:

In terms of the composition of her panel, does the future chair believe that she will be able to attract a diverse membership of the panel and does she think that having a diverse group of members on the panel would be beneficial and for what reasons?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you for the question. Yes, I do hope I can attract a diverse range of members on to the panel. It is also a very interesting panel, that is why I stood to be chair. I think, as we have heard from the Ministers last week, and within my speech, this is really a part of the cost-of-living crisis, access to affordable housing. This needs to be balanced with, as I said in my speech, the environment and the scarce resource of our land and ensure that we do not negatively affect the environment. So it is really interesting and something that the 3 Ministers have to work together, so it is I hope an attractive Scrutiny Panel to work on and people would want to work with me on this. I would hope that the Members who come will bring those different experiences as, even the Deputy himself said in his standing, different Members bring life experiences, work experiences and also experiences from our current roles here. So I hope that we can pull a team together that has that because it is a diverse and very breadth of issues that are on this panel.

5.1.12 The Connétable of St. Mary:

In the course of the previous panel's review as to the introduction of standards for rented properties, the panel heard from many landlords who are clearly almost aggrieved at what they perceive is a perception of how they react and that most of them are of course good landlords and wish to implement their standards. Does the candidate have any preconceived ideas as to how she might allay their fears on that point?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Connétable for his question. Obviously with the question earlier about conflicts of interest, I would like to let Members know that I am not only a landlord but my husband is a member of the J.L.A. (Jersey Landlords Association). This is on my declaration, so I do understand what the concerns are of landlords, and I think there needs to be a balance. I was very much involved in those discussions around how to make a balanced legislation around the rented dwellings and I know that the guidance is a very important part. That should be coming soon before legislation is enacted so,

as a panel, that will be very important to again engage landlords and tenants into looking at the guidelines and making sure that they are acceptable, clear and able to then be implemented.

The Connétable of St. Mary:

I thank the candidate for her answer and no supplementary.

5.1.13 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

The candidate will be aware from her international experience that there is ... she has just answered questions about conflicts of interest. I observe from having looked up the responsibilities for Ministers for the Environment when trying to defend the fact that our last Minister for the Environment was right to go to COP28, I realised that no other Minister for the Environment has the responsibilities for planning in any of the places except one state in Australia, and there is that because there is a conflict of interest between the natural environment and the built environment. Given her undoubted international knowledge in discharging her role on the panel, is she prepared to listen to those arguments which have been accepted elsewhere around the world and what would she do about them?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Deputy for his question. I think in answering the question that was there before from Deputy Tadier, I think the first point is to discuss with the other panel members to see if this is where we want to go with this review. Part of that review would be looking at how this is done; the role between planning and environment is done elsewhere. I think that would be an important part of any review, looking at how it is discharged elsewhere. I think it is really important. There is obviously an inherent conflict with the natural environment and urban environment, but it is very important that the natural environment becomes also part of the urban environment as well. We always talk about well-being and the importance of the natural environment being within urban spaces as well. The Connétable of St. Helier, for example, always is talking about the need for access to open spaces and how the public realm is supported by natural environment. It is also not inherently a conflict but also it needs to be combined together. So for my particular role within Scrutiny I think it is really important that we would first have an evidence-based review of the other systems around the world before we would be able to commit further.

5.1.14 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

I am grateful for the candidate's answer. Was she aware that in her absolutely brilliant remarks about the importance of the natural environment that the way that other countries have done that conflict is by separating it so you have a champion for both, equal? Was she aware that that is the international best practice that other countries have dealt with and dealt with well?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I am not aware of every other country. I own property in Belgium, so I do have an understanding of the planning system in Belgium and I can tell you it is very interesting reading it in Dutch and French. Imagine reading it in English and then having to do it in Dutch and French. It is something that I have learnt in the last few years. But I do not want to come into the Scrutiny Panel with preconceived ideas. This is not about me having my own politics and my own understanding, it is about being non-biased and scrutinising our Ministers and Jersey system. But of course part of that is to have evidence from other countries to inform us but the first and foremost it is about Jersey.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you very much. That brings the time for questions to an end and I can confirm that Deputy Jeune has been appointed Chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel.
[Approbation]

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I would just like to thank the Members for their support and would like to, of course, again ask if any Members would like to come and talk to me about being part of the panel. I welcome everybody.

6. Appointment of the Chair of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy Jeune. In accordance with Standing Order 120, the Assembly is due to appoint a new chair of the Health ...

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Sir, sorry to interrupt. I wonder with this amount of time left whether we should consider an early adjournment before we take on a new one, given that that could be a long process if there are a number of people standing.

Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

Can we at least find out what the nominations are, Sir, before we begin?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Are you content first to find out how many nominees there are before you move the proposition?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

It is a very good idea, Sir, yes.

[12:30]

The Deputy Bailiff:

In accordance with Standing Order 120(1E), the Ministers for Health and Social Services and Social Security should neither nominate nor vote in relation to this appointment but both are able to ask questions. I invite Members to make nominations for the chair of this panel.

Deputy H. Miles:

I would like to nominate Deputy Louise Doublet for this role.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Is that nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations?

Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

Can I nominate Deputy Beatriz Porée?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you. Is that seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations? There are 2 nominations; Deputy Doublet and Deputy Porée. Are you proposing the adjournment now?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, Sir, given there are 2 people, it is going to be unfair on one of them to have a huge gap because I think they will have to sit in isolation for 2½ hours, which they might like, I do not know. But I would propose the adjournment if possible.

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT PROPOSED

The Deputy Bailiff:

Is that proposal seconded? **[Seconded]** Are Members content to adjourn now until 2.15 p.m.? The Assembly is adjourned until 2.15 p.m.

[12:31]

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT

[14:17]

The Deputy Bailiff:

The nominations were Deputy Doublet and Deputy Porée. The first in time was Deputy Doublet, so I invite Deputy Porée to withdraw from the Assembly. I invite Deputy Doublet to speak for up to 10 minutes and after which she will face up to 20 minutes of questions.

6.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour:

I would like to begin by thanking the outgoing Scrutiny Panel for their work under the chairmanship of Deputy Ward and also to congratulate the new Ministers and Assistant Ministers for Health and Social Services and for Social Security on their appointments to these roles. I wish to serve the Assembly as chair of the Health and Social Panel. I bring experience to the role, an understanding of research methods and an evidence-based approach always, an inclusive way of working, an ability to rigorously examine policies and legislation across Ministerial portfolios and innovative ideas for engaging with the public. I will touch on my background and experience. I studied psychology at university, which gave me a good grounding in understanding research, which is of course critical for good scrutiny; that evidence-based approach has always been a part of my ethos. I went on to study for a post-graduate teaching qualification and taught in our schools for 8 years before becoming a States Member. My first term, which began in 2014, I chaired the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel, as it was then, and that was nearly 10 years ago and I had just turned 30, which will give away the big birthday that I have coming up tomorrow. **[Approbation]** Thank you. Not quite there yet, one more day of being in my 30s. For my second term I decided not to seek to chair one of the main panels but to work on many other panels and committees, including chairing the Diversity Forum, chairing the U.N.I.C.E.F. (United Nations Children's Fund) Baby-Friendly Committee, a member of the Early Years Policy Development Board, States trustee for Jersey Community Relations Trust and a member of the C.P.A. As well as these roles, I established and chaired a review panel into the gender pay gap in Jersey - one of the first review panels established by Scrutiny - and I am very proud of the work that we did there. Some way into the term I was also invited to join the Children, Education and Home Affairs Panel and the Care of Children Panel, both of which I managed to fit in. I also petitioned the Health Panel to initiate a review into maternity services, which they did start and I was co-opted on to the panel to take part in this review, which I very much enjoyed taking part in. My interests are very broad and I try to use the time I have to be as productive as possible and cover as many areas as I can. Members may wonder why I am interested in this subject area of Health and Social Services and Social Security. Social Security I have always been interested in because social policy is very much an area of strength and passion for me. I am very interested in scrutinising this area and I am keen to see what the new Minister will put in place. My experiences as a woman and as a mother have given me an insight into our health system. These experiences have been valuable and helped me to see the need, for example, for a review of the maternity services. I mentioned my age and I think health becomes something that we are more aware of as we get older. Certainly also having been a Member of this Assembly throughout the pandemic underlined the importance of our health service. Some of the health issues I have had myself that Members will be aware of because I do discuss it - I think it is important for awareness purposes - I suffered with long COVID for 2 years. I have fully recovered now but at times that illness was acutely disabling and made me really realise and understand the importance of our health services. I want our healthcare system to be the best that it can be. It is not just those in middle age and old age that face health challenges, I also understand the needs of children and I have realised that there can be a disconnect here between departments. When the panel is established, of course the panel members as a whole make final decisions on reviews and a good chair needs to be able to manage diverse views. We are

in the middle of transformation of our healthcare system and this needs to be carefully monitored. We need to look at the affordability of our healthcare system. Are the plans that are underway sustainable and will we be able to afford to deliver the improvements that our population are demanding? We, of course, have an ageing population and they need to be properly supported and I would like to understand how this can best be done. My ethos as a chair, first of all, integrity is absolutely the most important thing and is my guiding principle in any work I do. Impartiality is absolutely critical in Scrutiny. Scrutiny is not about me, it is about the public. It is about States Members and it is about listening to those views. It is also important to maintain good relationships with Ministers and Assistant Ministers and respect is absolutely key here. I respect every single Member of this Assembly and I am prepared to work with any Member in order to achieve good outcomes for the public. The aim of Scrutiny is not simply to criticise. In my previous Scrutiny reports I have always emphasised the positives that I have found in that review work and, ultimately, successful scrutiny helps Ministers to produce effective policies and legislation. As a chair I am innovative. In the past I have pioneered many new ways of working on Scrutiny. My panel in my first term was the first to hold evening meetings for the public to attend and share their views. We were also the first panel to use focus groups as part of our research. In the past when I have presented reviews that I have authored with my panel to the Assembly I have regularly made use of the ability to make an accompanying statement and to take questions from Members on said review. The use of review panels is important. The Gender Pay Gap Panel was one of the first review panels established, using the mechanism to co-opt Members. I have been co-opted in the past and, as a chair, I also co-opted other Members on to my panel and I would welcome doing this for any Members who perhaps do not want to be the member of a main panel but have specific interests in reviews. I was also the first lead member to engage directly with children and gather evidence from them using a variety of methods. I would continue to develop this using the participation standards. I have a vision for enabling the public to have their say. I would like to explore different ways of contributing, for example, online polls, Facebook live sessions with questions where people can post their views in the comments in real time, gathering views online. Parish consulting groups, I think the Parishes are an untapped resource for engaging with the public and I would like to do more here. I am an inclusive chair. Work-planning is important to ensure a good spread of review and question topics and listening to a cross-section of the public. It is important to engage with unions and other user groups. I would work flexibly with panel members. As a chair, I seek to empower my panel and to put their skills, time and knowledge to best use. In the past I have encouraged panel members to take a lead member role and to lead their own reviews, and I would be minded to do the same with the right team. It should be a team; it is important to work together. We will disagree sometimes and this is critical for good scrutiny. I would seek out diverse Members from across the Assembly in order to find this mixture. The team is the most important thing and I would very much like to build a team from across the Assembly and put my experience, impartiality and integrity to good use in this role. I welcome questions from Members.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy. Are there any questions for Deputy Doublet?

6.1.1 Deputy L. Stephenson:

Health is currently a highly politicised area, yet of course it is an area of absolute priority. How does the candidate intend to navigate this challenging landscape while remaining objective, as Scrutiny requires?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I think that I am ideally placed to scrutinise these policy areas. I do not particularly have any vested interest in either of the policy areas. I have respect for both of the Ministers and for the Assistant Ministers and I want them to succeed. My wish is to be a constructive part of that success.

6.1.2 Deputy L. Stephenson:

Given that requirement to be objective, how would the candidate manage conflicts of interest should they arise during her work chairing the panel?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Conflicts are a passion of mine because I believe in going above and beyond in managing conflicts. That is something I learnt on Scrutiny from the first panel officer that I worked with, and he drilled that into the panel. At the time other chairs have mentioned that they had as a standing agenda item any conflicts; that is something I used to do 10 years ago and I would continue to do that. When I was an Assistant Minister I sat both of my Ministers down and I went through any ... not just financial conflicts because of course Standing Orders requires that we declare any direct financial conflicts. But I think it does go beyond that and it is important to be transparent with those that you are working with. I would do exactly the same. I would sit down with whoever was the - I was going to say Chairmen's Committee then because that is what it was when I was first the chair - Scrutiny Liaison Committee, just to ensure that there is transparency there. I think other chairs have mentioned the need for training and I am completely behind that because I think unless we have standards and guidelines for managing and declaring conflicts, sometimes it might not occur to people what actions to take. I think that would be very helpful to have a standardised procedure across the Scrutiny team.

6.1.2 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

What areas would the candidate see as priorities for review, both in Health and Social Security?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I touched on some of the broader areas but what I would like to do is maintain an overview of the health areas and the social security areas. That would be done through questionings and through quarterly hearings and then there would be some specific review topics as well. I mentioned the affordability of healthcare, waiting lists are of concern to the public.

[14:30]

The health strategy is going to be a big area that will need to be looked at. Health inequalities, raising sufficient income to be able to afford our healthcare over a period of time. The workforce, which is of course of concern across many areas but particularly in health, will need a focus. I understand that the current panel ... from looking at the documents from the current panel, they were looking at the review of the Termination of Pregnancy Law, the maternity strategy, the dementia strategy, Mental Health (Jersey) Law and the Capacity and Self-Determination (Jersey) Law. All of these areas I have an interest in and I am keen to scrutinise. In Social ... sorry, I have got more for Health. I would like to look at the women's health strategy. I would also like to look at transitions generally, so when children transition into adult healthcare. I would like to understand better what the public want, about where their healthcare is going to be delivered and help the new Minister to come to good decisions that are in the best interests of the public and what they want. Social Security: I am very interested of course in the period products scheme and paid parental leave but also our Discrimination Law and whether any characteristics perhaps need to be added to the Discrimination Law there. I believe some work needs to be done around pensions as well.

6.1.3 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Does the Deputy agree that single-sex spaces within the health service must remain single sex in order to protect the sex-based rights of indignity of biological women and girls?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I thank the Constable for his question. This area is something that we were starting to talk about in Education and I was meeting all stakeholders to gather all views. The primary concern in any service

delivery is the safety of the people who are using the services. I would work to ensure that the Minister for Health and Social Services had that in mind.

6.1.4 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Does the candidate agree that her personal views will not be influenced by the views of the general public, which may not be in accord with her particular views?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I do not believe I have stated a personal view on this issue and I have done that for a reason, because I think it is important to listen to everybody and especially where it is a contentious issue I think it is important that people respectfully are able to have their say. I hope that Ministers who are dealing with this issue will be able to do so sensitively. I am happy to assist with this issue being discussed in a sensitive way that respects all of our Islanders.

6.1.5 Deputy M. Tadier:

The candidate made an assertion saying that the Parishes were an untapped resource for public engagement. What evidence does she have for that assertion?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Simply that I think they could be better used and I would like to engage more with the Constables, use the Parish Halls, perhaps access community groups. Because I know that many of the Constables are really good at having those links and those community groups, and I would like to hear what they think when I am undertaking Scrutiny reviews.

6.1.6 Deputy M. Tadier:

Could the candidate outline whether she only intends to use Parish Halls for this kind of engagement? Would she seek to also do outreach in places like Communicare or Maufant Village or the Good Companions Club at St. Clement, which do not necessarily involve premises for local government?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Absolutely. I mentioned that I was the first panel chair to hold evening meetings, which again was down to the goodwill of the Scrutiny officer, and Scrutiny officers do fantastic work. We held that evening meeting at the St. Paul's Centre but of course Parish Halls are an ideal venue. I would look at any community venues around the Island in order to best engage with the public. I think it is important that we go to where the public are. Sometimes we are stuck in holding our meetings in set rooms and we do have some great facilities here and the public are able to access them. I do not know if that is as widely known as it should be, that any Scrutiny hearing - and a previous chair mentioned that in his speech - that Scrutiny should be done in public. I firmly agree with that sentiment and I would encourage the public to take more of an interest in Scrutiny because Scrutiny is there to directly engage with the public and perhaps has the time and the resources to do so more frequently than Ministers, who are very busy. It is that gateway into influencing policy. While I would encourage the public to access the Scrutiny rooms where the hearings are, there is no reason why we perhaps could not go out and hold Scrutiny hearings in the Parish Hall, for instance. As I said, innovation is important and I think Scrutiny needs to continue to modernise and reach Islanders where they are.

6.1.7 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Problem areas in Health include data collection, lack of development of policy guidelines or awareness of them and a bullying culture. What experience do you have in addressing or scrutinising such areas?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Apologies, could the Deputy repeat, I think it was 3 areas?

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Data collection, lack of awareness or development of policy guidelines and a bullying culture.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I have not scrutinised Health specifically in the past, beyond the maternity services review, but I believe all 3 of those areas were touched on in the maternity services review. They are themes, are they not really, underlying? I think that is very helpful and I think what I will be doing, if I am appointed as chair, I will be going back through Members' questions to pull out any themes or any topics and putting that on the panel's agenda.

6.1.8 Deputy R.J. Ward:

Can I ask the candidate what role she believes the panel has in scrutinising the development of new hospital facilities?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That is a great question and I do firmly believe that that is such an important project that it needs to be established as a review panel. I know that this has been done so far and I would work with the other chairs because it is such a cross-cutting issue to establish a review panel for that area of work.

6.1.9 Deputy R.J. Ward:

Also, given the importance of both areas of the remits, Health and Social Security, are there any areas of Social Security the chair candidate is aware of that perhaps is equally as important or high up on the agenda in that area?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Can I just ask the Deputy to clarify? Is he asking me to compare any issues in Social Security and are they as important as the hospital?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I do apologise, it was not the best question I have ever asked, if I am honest. I am trying to say: are there any areas in Social Security that are perhaps of equal importance in terms of a scale in Social Security that the Deputy would see as important in looking at as the Scrutiny Panel? How do you prioritise, if you like, the Social Security element of the remit?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

That is a great question and I am used to historically scrutinising Children, Education and Home Affairs, and I think in the past Home Affairs had been neglected. I did strive to ensure that was not the case. I would do the same with Social Security. I think because we are waiting for some quite big policy decisions from Health, I would perhaps, with the agreement of the panel, focus on Social Security in the first instance to make sure that it is not forgotten. Then once some of those decisions come down the line from Health about the direction of where Health is going in our Island, then there would be the time and the capacity to focus on Health. But of course it is always going to be a panel decision, and it very much depends on panel members' views and what they would like to scrutinise as well.

6.1.10 Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour:

In relation to Social Security, the previous Scrutiny Panel produced a report on the overpayment of benefits. Does the candidate have a plan for carrying that review forward?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I thank the Member for his question. I think one of the most important roles as a Scrutiny chair is to make sure that previous reviews are not forgotten and that can be really difficult. I think if we are honest, I am not sure any one of us has really got that absolutely perfect because there are always so many pressing issues coming to us as an Assembly that must be examined. But what I would like to do is establish something akin to the decision-tracker, which the States Greffe ... it is fantastic by the way. If Members have not looked at it, please do because I think a lot of work has gone into that. I would like to see something similar in Scrutiny to keep track of recommendations of past panels and that is something, I think, that should be done with the Scrutiny Liaison Committee.

6.1.11 Deputy M.R. Ferey:

What is the candidate's view on writing off overpayment of benefits that are the fault of the department?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I do not have a view on that at this time, so I would look at that report with the new panel once it is established.

6.1.12 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Would the candidate advise which of her previous Scrutiny reviews was most impactful?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

When I was a new Member and I chaired the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel there was a proposal to cut nursery funding, and I strongly opposed that. Some Members who were in the Assembly with me at the time will probably remember that. The desire behind my opposition to it was that it was not motivated by what was in the best interests of children. It was motivated by a desire to make savings, so that cut was attempted. I succeeded in stopping that and I think, as States Members, there will always be one or 2 things that we feel we have really had an impact on, and that for me stands out as one of them. Another function that Scrutiny Panels can do is to make propositions and amendments. Again, I think that should be used more. For example, if a Scrutiny report, if the recommendations have not been followed up on by the Minister, the panel does have the ability to bring a proposition or to amend legislation and the propositions that have come into the Assembly. I did that with what was then the M.T.F.P. (Medium Term Financial Plan), which was the Budget at the time. I managed to restore £250,000 back into the Education budget, which I believe would have had a positive impact at the time. I achieved that with an evidence-based approach. I went through that M.T.F.P. line by line and I scrutinised it down to the nth detail. Doing that enabled me to spot some of the hidden numbers or omission of numbers. Sorry, Sir, that is probably unparliamentary, not omission of numbers but some of the information that was perhaps harder to decipher and understand, which led me to then gather the evidence to bring that amendment and to restore that funding into the Education Department. I also feel that the work I did around the gender pay gap, which again was with Members from across the Assembly, and with some differing points of view and a mix of genders, the work that we did on that panel, I think, has led to some significant cultural change in the Island and I am very proud of the impact of those reviews.

6.1.13 Deputy M. Tadier:

Following on from the gender pay gap, would the potential chair consider scrutinising other pay gaps in Jersey, which include the racial pay gap, which we do not even know anything about yet and perhaps other pay gaps that may exist with different demographics?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I thank the Member for the question and, again, I absolutely agree with him. I think that could possibly make a really good review panel. I think inequality is generally sometimes hidden, and I did refer to the ethnicity pay gap in the gender pay gap reports and I believe one of the recommendations was that further work should be done. I would absolutely be behind that.

6.1.14 Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I am glad that the Deputy mentioned or the candidate mentioned discrimination legislation in her speech. The main difference between our Discrimination Law and the U.K. Equality Act is the omission in our legislation of the protective characteristic of religious belief. What is the candidate's view on incorporating religious belief as a protective characteristic within our legislation?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Again, I would not state my beliefs in a Scrutiny context because it would depend on panel decision. But I do believe that evidence from the latest social survey points towards Islanders wanting religion and belief.

[14:45]

Because of course deeply-held beliefs are not just religious beliefs but Islanders also hold non-religious beliefs which should be protected as well. That is certainly something that I could discuss with the panel.

6.1.15 Deputy M. Tadier:

Without wanting to enter into a debate, it does arise from the previous question, does the potential Scrutiny chair accept that Discrimination Law is there to protect things that people cannot control? You cannot control normally if you are a man or a woman, you cannot control if you are born of a certain race, you cannot control whether you are born with a disability but you can control what your religion and your beliefs are. It is wrong to conflate beliefs, which can be any kind of belief, with actual characteristics that currently fall under discrimination.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

It sounds like the Deputy might like to join my panel if I am appointed as chair because I can see that he has an interest in this area, which I welcome. I would seek to listen to all views and come to a decision based upon the consensus of the panel.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Time for a last question to the Deputy. In that case that brings ...

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

Sorry, Sir.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Yes, Deputy Ferey, another one.

6.1.16 Deputy M.R. Ferey:

Again, not wanting to enter into a debate but Discrimination Law is about protecting rights and freedoms. Does the candidate agree with that statement?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Yes.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you. It is almost up to 20 minutes, so that brings that time for questions to an end. I invite Deputy Doublet to please withdraw and invite Deputy Porée to return to the Chamber. Deputy Porée, are you ready to address the Assembly? In that case you have 10 minutes to do so and then face some questions for up to 20 minutes.

6.2 Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M. Porée of St. Helier South:

Firstly, I would like to thank all Members present for giving me the time and the opportunity to stand before the Assembly and to ask you all to consider me for the role of the chair of the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel. The reason why I am putting myself forward for the role is because I feel that Scrutiny Panels offer new Members with a great opportunity to learn many aspects of the role of States Members. It gives us hands-on involvement in the making of policies. It provides us with an in-depth understanding of how legislation is evaluated and measured. It allows Members to assess the impact that new policies have on everyday people. Most importantly, being in a Scrutiny Panel allows Members to be the critical friend of our elected Ministers. I would be honoured to be the chair of this panel. I feel that I can offer continuity of the understanding of the work that the panel has done to date. I will be able to provide corporate memory for the panel. I already have a good working relationship with the panel officers, so I would like to think anyway, and I feel that in the past 2 years I have grown professionally and I am now ready to take on a new responsibility. What other credentials do I have that, potentially, can make me a good chair, you may be asking? I will provide Members with a small narrative of my previous work experience, which I believe is of relevance to this role. I have extensive experience in working with people in many capacities, for instance, as a reliable member of a team, as well as providing care on an individual basis. For many years I supported vulnerable people; being a support worker meant that I had to work closely with my colleagues and develop trust. Trust is fundamental when working in often volatile and highly stressful environments. But clear and effective communication with your colleagues is also important and makes for effective and productive work. I have worked with large teams but also with small ones. But, ultimately, the principle of respect among your work colleagues is essential if the team is to rely on each other to do the best that we possibly can do. Through my many years of working as self-employed, first by running restaurants and food outlets with my husband and later as a sole trader, I have gained wide experience of managing people, while holding the sole responsibility for the overall functioning of the businesses. Managing staff while keeping a friendly but professional approach, it is a skill which I have developed through my many years as a business person. My most relevant experience for this role I must say is the fact that I have spent the past 18 months as a member of 2 large Scrutiny Panels. The Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel, where the workload has been extensive, mainly due to the fact that the Health Department is going through a period of upheaval and needed to change. As a Scrutiny Panel, we developed relationships with the relevant Ministers to achieve the best outcome for the Island and the Island people. The other Scrutiny Panel I served is the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. With the latter Scrutiny I was given the privilege of chairing a review on the welfare of migrant workers. The chairing of the review panel was emotionally challenging, I may say, and a completely new review to Jersey regarding permit workers. The report produced has commanded the attention from the Assembly and it has shone a light on the living and working conditions of migrant workers. The experience of the past 18 months has equipped me with an in-depth knowledge, both on how the Scrutiny should work but more closely to the multiple areas of work that Health and Social Security Departments are dealing with. I believe this equips me well with knowledge and understanding in holding Ministers to account in the best way on the key workstreams that a Minister will be responsible for. I would be honoured to be given the chance to be the chair of the Health and Social Security Panel, so I can continue the work I have started since the beginning of this term, and I have still much more value to add to it and, hopefully, this time as a chair. I would like to thank Members for your time and I am happy to take any questions.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy Porée. Do we have some questions for the Deputy?

6.2.1 Deputy L. Stephenson:

Health is currently a highly politicised area, yet of course it is an area of absolute priority. How does the candidate intend to navigate this challenging landscape while remaining objective, as Scrutiny requires?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you to the Deputy for her question. As a Scrutiny Panel, we very much reflect on the work the Ministers will be doing. In this particular sense I will be very much responding to the areas of where the Minister wants to start their work with and then we will progress from there. But I think more importantly is to give the Minister an opportunity to learn the portfolio and take on the work that has been left behind.

6.2.2 Deputy L. Stephenson:

Given the requirement to be objective, how would the candidate manage conflicts of interest should they arise during their work chairing a panel?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you for your question. Conflict of interest is something that all States Members should be aware of and that we know that we have to declare any possible conflicts of interest when we are dealing with particular issues in the community. I would also be doing that if I was to get the role of the chair of the panel, no different from what I have done now. I would, hopefully, have the officers helping me to assess the areas where these conflicts of interest could possibly be a need to be declared. If it is in terms of other political parties, I can only say that Scrutiny is Scrutiny and Assembly work is Assembly work. In the great words of Deputy Geoff Southern: "When you are in Scrutiny you wear your Scrutiny hat and you try and do the best possible job you can do."

6.2.3 Deputy R.S. Kovacs:

I will ask the same question as the previous candidate: what priorities does the candidate see to seek review on, both on Health and on Social Security?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you for your question. My priorities, if I was to speak from a chair point of view, would be to look at the outcome of the review on overpayments that the Scrutiny Panel has just completed and that would be good to see the end of it. Another area which I feel is going to be coming very soon to be debated is going to be the assisted dying issue. I think, as a panel, we really have to be prepared to deal with that. But I also believe that possibly there will be a review on that. Outside from that, I will be very reliant on what the Minister will be doing, how the Minister will intend to carry on its responsibilities and how the Minister will intend to prioritise them.

6.2.4 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Could I ask the candidate how she will go about prioritising the work programme associated with the Scrutiny Panel?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you, Deputy, for your question. As I said previously on my last question, the Scrutiny Panel will work according to the work that the Minister will be carrying on. As a Scrutiny, we cannot tell Ministers what work to do but we can support the Ministers on the work they will be doing. It is not about Scrutiny what work we want to do but if you will be more to the fact of what the Minister will take on his priorities or their priorities and we, as a Scrutiny Panel, will follow with that.

6.2.5 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Would the candidate consider there is any further work that the Scrutiny Panel may enter into in relation to the recent rheumatology review?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Yes, obviously we are expecting the review on that and once the review is completed we will work accordingly with that and with the Minister.

[15:00]

6.2.6 Deputy M. Tadier:

Does the candidate and potential chair have any ideas about engaging further with the public, especially perhaps with demographics and communities that up until now we have struggled to engage with?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you for your question, Deputy. I think any Member of this Assembly should be willing to work with a deep awareness of what the community wants. I think if we are to make policies that are to benefit the Island, the public opinion is very important. Again, depending on what pieces of work will come forward, if it needs the public consultation, then that is what the panel should be doing.

6.2.7 Deputy M. Tadier:

Could the candidate give some examples from her recent work on Scrutiny where they have engaged effectively with the public?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you for your follow-up question. Within the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel, yes, the last and the first piece of work we have done to date during this mandate has been on the overpayments, social security overpayments. This is not fully completed. We have given the recommendations to the Minister, which reply was sent back to us. Unfortunately, on this instance, the panel has decided that the reply of the Ministers was not completely satisfactory and so right now we are waiting for the new Minister to look into the review and come up with an answer to the recommendations, if they wish to do so. Also, sorry, could you just ask the question?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Through the Chair.

Deputy M. Tadier:

It was largely about engagement with the public, so the experience that you have had in coming to those findings and recommendations.

The Deputy Bailiff:

That the Deputy has had.

Deputy M. Tadier:

The Deputy, yes, that is right, Sir. We need to put a bit of distance between us ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

I know, we will try and bridge that by talking through the chair.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Thank you, Sir.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Okay, my experience with engaging with the public in terms of finding their opinion in how certain issues are affecting their everyday life has been quite extensive. As I mentioned, through the overpayments with social security but as well while working as a panel member for the Children, Education and Home Affairs, where we extensively asked for the public participation, especially those who were most affected by the work permit issues. It has been a great experience to understand how to call out the public for their opinion in terms of how to provide your questionnaires and how to basically ask those questions to the public and how to protect the public. Many people who have benefited or who have participated in these 2 reviews I am talking about, often they are the most vulnerable. As panels, we have to be very careful in how those questions were taken forward to the public and we had a great deal of responsibility to these vulnerable people. But, yes, their opinion still is relevant and, as they can tell you of their stories and their experiences, is very little we can do as States Members.

6.2.8 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Problem areas in Health include data collection, lack of development or awareness of policy guidelines and a bullying culture. What experience does the candidate have in addressing or scrutinising these areas?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you, Deputy, for your questions. I would say that the roles I have taken on the 2 panels I have been a member of, we would very much do that on a day-to-day basis. We scrutinise, we look at the dates, we reflect upon, if we are not satisfied as a panel we will be asking Ministers for further information. It is about a dialogue between the Scrutiny Panel and the Ministers in order to gather the information necessary, being that in terms of data or not in order to do our work. Obviously the role of the officers are very important on that and I would hope that the officers would be providing me with support to do the job properly.

6.2.9 Deputy I. Gardiner:

If the candidate can advise what plans, if any, she has to scrutinise the Health Board?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Thank you, Deputy, for your question. I feel that I may have touched on that question already. As a Scrutiny Panel, even as a chair, we will be very much responding to the will of the Minister and how the Minister will choose to prioritise their workload. As I said earlier on in my original speech, we will be a critical friend but it is not for the Scrutiny to dictate what areas of work the Minister will be doing. But whatever the Minister will take forward we will be alongside there helping to make sure that the work is done.

6.2.10 Deputy I. Gardiner:

I agree on the first part, this is not the Scrutiny Panel to dictate the work of the Minister. Saying this, I think it is the role of the Scrutiny Panel to scrutinise areas that are important for the public and, as we know, the Health Board is the area that is extremely important for the public and its working. I would like to ask again, what plans, if any, the chair has to scrutinise the Health Board?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Okay, thank you for your second question. What areas? The area of the remuneration is something that we will intend to take as a panel as a matter of priority. Outside that the Health Board, how it is

going to be taken forward from that. I would say we are very much going to be reliant on the new Minister to start work and to carry on work on the facilities of the Health Department. So far, I suppose, maybe I am not answering your question but I will be looking ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

Deputy Gardiner’s question; you refer to it as Deputy Gardiner’s question.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée:

Sorry, Sir. So far I cannot give Deputy Gardiner a better answer but I can say at the first instance my priority, if elected as a member, will be to meet up with the Minister and talk through his priorities.

6.2.11 Deputy M.R. Ferey:

It is only fair that I ask the same question as I did the previous candidate in relation to social security. The candidate has already mentioned the overpayment of benefits review. What is her view on writing off overpayments that are the fault of the department?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M. Porée:

Sorry, could you just repeat the last bit of your sentence?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I am happy to repeat. What is the candidate’s view on writing off overpayments that are not the fault of the individual and are the fault of the department?

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M. Porée:

I thank the Deputy for asking this question. As a Scrutiny Panel member, work was done on the basis of how these overpayments would impact on the health and well-being of the people who benefit from those contributions. My answer to you would be, yes, writing off those overpayments is very plausible and a good way to go because I believe if we are to find that these overpayments, as the panel has, are not always the fault of the constituent or the person in receipt of the benefit, to actually allow those overpayments to loom over people’s heads, while giving them so much stress and anxiety, the least that can be done is to write off those payments.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Are there any further questions for Deputy Porée? In that case, that brings that period of questions to an end and I invite Deputy Doublet to return to the Chamber. As there are 2 candidates, the electronic voting system will be used. Any Member wishing to vote for Deputy Doublet should press the pour button; any Member wishing to vote for Deputy Porée should press the contre button; Members who wish to abstain can do so in the usual way. I invite Members to return to their seats and the Greffier to open the voting. If all Members have had the opportunity of casting their votes, I ask the Greffier to close the voting. I can announce that the result of the voting is as follows: Deputy Doublet 24 votes, Deputy Porée 21 votes and one abstention. Therefore, I announce that Deputy Doublet has been appointed chair of the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel. **[Approbation]**

Deputy L.M.C Doublet of St. Saviour: 24		Deputy B.B.de S.V.M Porée Of St. Helier North: 21		ABSTAIN: 1
Connétable of St. Helier		Connétable of St. Lawrence		Deputy M.R. Scott
Connétable of St. Clement		Connétable of St. Brelade		
Connétable of St. Mary		Connétable of Trinity		
Connétable of St. Saviour		Connétable of St. Peter		
Deputy C.F. Labey		Connétable of St. Martin		

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet		Connétable of St. John		
Deputy K.F. Morel		Connétable of Grouville		
Deputy S.M. Ahier		Connétable of St. Ouen		
Deputy I. Gardiner		Deputy G.P. Southern		
Deputy I.J. Gorst		Deputy M. Tadier		
Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf		Deputy S.G. Luce		
Deputy Sir P.M. Bailhache		Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat		
Deputy D.J. Warr		Deputy R.J. Ward		
Deputy H.M. Miles		Deputy C.S. Alves		
Deputy J. Renouf		Deputy L.J. Farnham		
Deputy R.E. Binet		Deputy S.Y. Mézec		
Deputy H.L. Jeune		Deputy T.A. Coles		
Deputy M.E. Millar		Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée		
Deputy A. Howell		Deputy C.D. Curtis		
Deputy M.R. Ferey		Deputy R.S. Kovacs		
Deputy B. Ward		Deputy A.F. Curtis		
Deputy K.M. Wilson				
Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson				
Deputy M.B. Andrews				

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Can I thank Members for their support and invite expressions of interest to join the panel.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M. Porée:

Can I just take this opportunity to congratulate Deputy Doublet and wish you the very best in your new position? Thank you.

[15:15]

7. Appointment of Two Members of the States Employment Board

The Deputy Bailiff:

In accordance with the Employment of States of Jersey Employees (Jersey) Law 2005, the Assembly is due to appoint 2 members of the States Employment Board. I invite the chair of the S.E.B. (States Employment Board), the Chief Minister, to make his 2 nominations for Members who are not Ministers or Assistant Ministers.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

I thank Members for their interest. I would like to nominate the Connétable of St. Clement and Deputy Kovacs of St. Saviour.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Are the nominations seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations?

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Please, Sir, may I propose Deputy Bailhache? **[Seconded]**

Female Speaker:

Could I propose Deputy Ahier, please? **[Seconded]**

The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you. Anyone else? The nominations are the Connétable of St. Clement, Deputy Kovacs, Deputy Bailhache and Deputy Ahier. We will now proceed with a secret ballot and I invite the ushers to distribute ballot papers.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Sir, just to clarify, it is up to 2 votes, that we can vote for up to 2 names?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Yes, you can put down one or 2 names. It is a secret ballot, so do not put your own name unless of course you are a candidate, in which case you probably will want to.

The Greffier of the States:

You write both names on the same piece of paper.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Yes, on the same piece of paper. To remind you, you can vote for one or 2 candidates and the candidates are the Connétable of St. Clement, Deputy Kovacs, Deputy Bailhache and Deputy Ahier.

The Deputy Bailiff:

If all Members have been able to cast their votes and all votes have been collected, the Deputy Greffier and the Assistant Greffier will retire to undertake the count. This is likely to take a little while, so we will proceed with the business. Going back to the Order Paper, there is nothing under G or H.

QUESTIONS

8. Written Questions

8.1 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St Helier North of the Chief Minister regarding g Government expenditure on the new hospital / healthcare facilities programme. (WQ.1/2024)

Question

Will the Chief Minister state the amount of Government expenditure per annum since 2012 on the new hospital / healthcare facilities programme, as well as the amount of expenditure each year during the same period on consultancy for the hospital site selection process?

Answer

A breakdown of the expenditure per annum on initiatives to deliver a new hospital for Jersey, and latterly, New Healthcare Facilities, can be found below. It is important to note that each project has informed the next: information has been reused and the cumulative effect is that with each iteration progress can be accelerated towards delivery.

Initiative	Year	Expenditure (£m)	Notes
Hospital project mandated	2012	0.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progressed to site selection/feasibility before project closure.
	2013	0.0	
	2014	1.4	

under P.82/2012	2015	3.2	
	2016	4.7	
Future Hospital Project	2017	15.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressed to RIBA2 Concept Design before project closure/unsuccesful outline planning application. • Includes £0.9m of site acquisition and associated costs, e.g. stamp duty.
	2018	16.6	
	2019	6.0	
Our Hospital Project	2019	0.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressed to RIBA3 Developed Design before project closure and achieved planning consent. • Includes £25m of site acquisition and associated costs, e.g. stamp duty. • Includes £9.6m investment in now operational facilities – Enid Quenault Health and Wellbeing Centre.
	2020	10.6	
	2021	52.2	
	2022	20.5	
New Healthcare facilities Programme	2023	38.4 (unaudited)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unaudited 2023 expenditure represents an underspend against approved budget of £51.5m. • Overdale project completing RIBA2 Concept Design stage and on track to deliver RIBA3 Developed Design quicker than previous iterations. • Includes £17.6m of site acquisition and associated costs, e.g. stamp duty. • Includes £6.7m investment in now operational facilities – Enid Quenault Health and Wellbeing Centre. • Includes £0.5m demolition at Overdale site – assets under construction.

With reference to the question on consultancy for site selection, the ledger does not allow for a breakdown in expenditure specifically on consultancy services related to the site selection process.

8.2 Deputy M.R. Scott of St. Brelade of the Chair of the States Employment Board regarding training material on bullying provided to Government employees. (WQ.2/2024)

Question

Will the Chair provide details of any training material on bullying provided to Government employees; and further provide details of the frequency of delivery and the attendance requirements regarding such training?

Answer

Dignity and Respect training is provided as part of corporate statutory and mandatory training for all employees; and is included in the corporate induction ‘My Welcome’ training that is provided for all new hired employees. The learning module covers the following:

- Benefits that come with a culture of respect at work and the behaviours that make this happen, as well as those that stop it happening.
- The dignity and respect at work policy and what an employee's responsibilities are in relation to it
- What an employee needs to do if they have any concerns about their own or another person's treatment.
- Putting this understanding into practice with learning challenges based on realistic situations.

The above also includes case studies and is available to all employees in Connect People: Connected Learning. Contingent workers can access this learning using the Virtual College while we finalise the process for contingent workers to be able to access all learning tools on Connect People.

A review of the frequency with which employees should complete this, and all statutory and mandatory training requirements, is being undertaken during Q1 2024. The current guidance is that all employees need to complete this training during 2024.

The States of Jersey Code of Practice on performance and accountability also confirms that public servants must complete all statutory and mandatory training.

8.3 The Connétable of St. Brelade of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding grants or loans issued to Government arm's length organisations with a value of over £20,000. (WQ.3/2024)

Question

Will the Minister provide a breakdown of any grants or loans issued to Government arm's length organisations with a value of over £20,000 in the last year, together with their repayment schedules?

Answer

I can confirm that no new loans were made to any Arm's Length Organisations in 2023.

For the States Owned Entities and the Arm's Length Organisations listed in the Public Finance Manual, grants issues during the year 2023 are as follows:

	2023(£)
Digital Jersey	2,325,000
JACS	454,900
Jersey Arts Centre Association	850,000
Jersey Business Ltd	1,650,000
Jersey Citizens Advice Bureau	271,000
Jersey Consumer Council	137,000
Jersey Employment Trust	2,130,084
Jersey Finance Ltd	6,354,080
Jersey Heritage	8,047,229
Jersey Opera House	510,734
Jersey Sport Ltd	2,142,433
Visit Jersey Ltd	5,650,000
Jersey Arts Trust	-
Channel Islands Brussels Office	360,004
Government of Jersey London Office	646,000
Andium Homes	-
Ports of Jersey	-
SOJDC	-

Treasury and Exchequer are completing their year-end Annual Report and Accounts process at this time and therefore these figures are unaudited and could be subject to change.

8.4 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St Helier North of the Chief Minister regarding the current number of employees and vacancies within the Cabinet Office. (WQ.4/2024)

Answer not available at time of sitting.

8.5 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St Helier North of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding locum and agency staff in the Health and Community Services Department. (WQ.5/2024)

Question

Will the Minister state the total cost of locum and agency staff to the Health and Community Services Department in 2023?

Answer

Total locum and agency costs in the Health & Community Services Department in 2023 was £30.4 million.

Total staff costs for the Department in 2023 were £210.1 million including agency and locum costs.

Locum and agency staff are supporting HCS in delivering health and care services for Islanders. They cover vacancies and period of leave for permanent staff or support permanent staff when demand is higher than expected.

8.6 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St Helier North of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding revenue expenditure overspend or underspend in 2023. (WQ.6/2024)

Question

Will the Minister provide a breakdown by Ministerial department of any revenue expenditure overspend or underspend in 2023?

Answer

The final financial position for 2023 is currently being finalised and will be subject to audit before publication in the Annual Report and Accounts in April. The ARA includes detailed disclosures of actual revenue expenditure incurred against approved budgets as part of the Statement of Outturn against Approval. This will show both over- and underspends for the year at a Head of Expenditure level (as approved in the Government Plan) – which aligns to Ministerial departments.

9. Oral Questions

9.1 Deputy M.B. Andrews of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding tax relief for lower income earners and students who self-funded their professional career development. (OQ.12/2024)

Will the Minister advise what consideration, if any, has been given to introducing a tax allowance or tax relief for lower income earners or students who self-fund their professional career development?

Deputy E. Millar (The Minister for Treasury and Resources):

In the short time that I have been in office, I have not had the opportunity to consider the merits or otherwise of introducing a new tax allowance or relief to support students. Nevertheless, my initial sense is that the tax system is probably not the right place to incentivise and subsidise training costs, primarily because many people, especially low earners such as full-time students, would not fully benefit from any allowance because the tax thresholds are now so high. Following Deputy Andrews' proposition last year, the Government are establishing a skills development fund, and I think that is likely to be a more appropriate way to assist and provide funding to those who are looking to retrain and upskill. I will simply consider it in my tax policy priorities for 2024 and, like my predecessors, I welcome input from all States Members.

9.2 Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South of the Minister for Housing and Communities regarding improvements to access to social housing. (OQ.14/2024)

Will the Minister commit to widening access to social housing and reducing the age of eligibility for persons without children from 40 to 25 by implementing the timeline included in the roadmap for improving access to social housing in Jersey published in July 2023?

Deputy S. Y. Mézec (The Minister for Housing and Communities):

Yes.

9.2.1 Deputy D.J. Warr

Apologies for being unprepared here. Will the Minister bring forward the timetable for reducing the age of entry into the Housing Gateway so that in March the new age limit will be 25, in line with his desire to overcome the housing crisis and, if not, why not?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

The timeline, as I understood it, it was proposed to bring the age down to 25 by October not March. March is due to be down to 30. I would propose sticking with the original plan.

Deputy D.J. Warr

Sorry, Sir, I do not think he answered my question.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Well, he did. He said it is in October and that was the original plan.

Deputy D.J. Warr

My question was: was he intending on doing it earlier?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Well, he is not. He is sticking to October.

9.2.2 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

With that succinct yes, my supplementary ask is how many additional people will be, in the Minister's view, therefore, entitled to the provision of social housing?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Ultimately we will not know that until it happens because we do not know how many people currently do not fit within the eligibility criteria who will actually benefit from that if it is extended to them, or when it is extended to them, I should say. The last time that the criteria were widened as part of this phased approach there were not as many applications as the Gateway was expecting there to be at that point. So I think we should stick to the plan as it currently is but it may be worth having some kind of a think about advertising more widely that the criteria have been expanded. I am sure that there will be lots of people out there who have been living their lives just expecting that they would not ever be eligible for social housing and if that does change we need to make sure that they know about it so that we get the Gateway to being what it ought to be, which is an accurate reflection of what need there is for affordable housing in Jersey and not just who happens to tick the box with the criteria.

9.2.3 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

Thanking the Minister for his reply, does he have any indication of a range: is it 100, 200? The important supplementary question I want to ask is: what is he going to do to ensure that the supply of those houses is available?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

That last part is an extremely good point because it would be foolish to widen the criteria when the supply has not been delivered because that would overwhelm the Gateway and you would end up achieving little apart from extending waiting lists and having people languish there. We are in a lucky position where with the Cyril le Marquand Court having been delivered, that has had a substantial impact on reducing the demand for one-bedroom homes. That is not just people transferring from the private sector; it is also people downsizing within social housing, which means we free up 2 and 3-bedroom places to allow people into those. Edinburgh House, of course, has also recently had people move in and relatively soon we will be looking at The Limes as well. That is quite a substantial amount of supply being put on in a relatively short period of time, which means that high urgent demand for one-bedroom flats can be managed better than we have been able to do previously, and I think that means it can be justified to expand the criteria without worrying too much about overwhelming the list. I think we saw that last time it was expanded that it just did not happen.

9.2.4 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Would the Minister consider removing the need to provide a deposit under the First Step scheme to make sure that the barrier for the first-time buyers might be overtaken?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Sir, that is not this question. I think she has mixed it up with a later question. The First Step scheme is not to do with the roadmap for social housing.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Apologies. When we expand this scheme for 25 years of age to buy the property, would ... apologies.

The Deputy Bailiff:

It is the question on reducing the age for eligibility for persons without children. We will come back to you if you think of a question, Deputy Gardiner.

9.2.5 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

As chair of J.A.Y.F., Jersey's youth homelessness charity, we often see we have youngsters coming through and being supported by us when they are ready for independent housing but under the age of 25 they are unable to find appropriate housing. Will the Minister explain if he will review the access for social housing for those under the age of 25 and, if not, why not?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Definitely and I am aware of instances of younger people who have been assisted by the very charity that the Deputy has referred to and as they have got older have faced arbitrary difficulties with transitioning to independence. As part of our corporate parenting responsibilities, we accept that we continue to have a role in looking after children who have been through the care system into what is legally considered their adulthood. My parents did not just throw me out when I turned 18. They let me live there for a little bit longer after that as well and we should have the same approach to the children who are in our care.

9.2.6 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Understandably, of course, it is very important that we, as corporate parents, take the responsibility of those in our care but unfortunately J.A.Y.F. does see a number of youngsters who are not in the care system who also are vulnerable from homelessness and I believe also need to be supported in finding that independent housing and giving them a safe and affordable place to live. Will the Minister, therefore, commit to developing a specific strategy to combat access to affordable housing for especially vulnerable young adults not just those care leavers under the age of 25?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Definitely and I would be very keen to have that conversation directly with this particular charity and others that are involved in this area. I think that in the last few years we have seen the development of the Housing Advice Service, which I think is branching out into doing more than we anticipated that it would do to support people to find the right kind of housing for them. As we continue to develop that, that could well be a place where we help people on an individual basis through those pathways. That is something I would definitely like to consider and I am happy to have that conversation.

[15:30]

9.2.7 Deputy T.A. Coles:

With the expanding of the eligibility, does the Minister agree that there may be a need to review the banding of priorities within the housing model?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Is the Deputy referring to the bands - there is band 1, 2 and 3 - or is he referring to the criteria that distinguish between them?

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Yes, the criteria that distinguishes between the 2 to ensure that the most vulnerable are taken before age.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

It was not that long ago that this particular banding was changed and was improved from what existed previously and I think was simplified. I think it is fair to keep a watching eye on that and look at how demand is managed as the criteria are widened and the new supply comes on board, but this particular iteration of the banding system is not that old yet at this point. We must keep a watching eye on that but I would not yet suggest commissioning a full review into it because it has not been in place for that long.

Deputy M. Tadier:

My question was effectively asked by Deputy Jeune, so I do not need to ask it.

9.2.8 Deputy D.J. Warr

When we come to reducing the age of eligibility, when people go into the Gateway band, there is an income level. It is income criterion that is set at the point of entry. Obviously with a younger generation going in, their ability to increase their income will hopefully progress as time goes on. Are there any considerations around looking at rent review whereby instead of paying 80 per cent, maybe those people end up paying 100 per cent?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

No, charging 100 per cent of rent is not social housing.

9.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune of the Minister for Social Security regarding the outcomes from the free period product scheme. (OQ.22/2024)

Will the Minister advise what demonstrable outcomes have been identified from the free period product scheme and will she confirm what future plans, if any, she has for expanding the scheme?

Deputy L.V. Feltham (The Minister for Social Security):

I thank the Deputy for her question. As she will know, I personally have been critical of and raised concerns about whether the scheme was meeting its intended outcomes, which are to address period poverty, meet individual needs, make it easy for people to access products, respect dignity and support inclusion. At this point, I have not received sufficient evidence to demonstrate that these outcomes have been met or are being delivered and I will be meeting with relevant officers next week to discuss how the scheme can be improved. As for scheme expansion, I am keen to see improvements in relation to the location and process of obtaining products and also a wider range of products being made available.

9.3.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Minister for her answer. Therefore, can the Minister advise how she will, for example, integrate sustainable period products into any future scheme that she is looking at and how she will be able to work with the Jersey Sustainable Period Products campaign, for example, to provide those superior products as part of the scheme but also the education around such a scheme and the introduction of sustainable period products? If not, why not?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I will be quite happy to look at ways in which we can incorporate sustainable period products into the scheme. There has been a review undertaken of the pilot scheme and the consultation in relation to that review did look at sustainable period products. I am quite happy to meet with interested stakeholders about how we can make those more available.

9.3.2 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I want to follow up on the sustainable products. Would the Minister be specifically looking under that umbrella of sustainable products at reusable and washable products, which of course are the most ideal products in terms of the environment and cost savings? If she would agree to include those in her scheme, how does she think they can be distributed to women who need them?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes, I would agree personally to be including those particular products in the scheme. I know that different products are suitable to different people and for me it is important to include a full range of products to ensure that we are fully inclusive. I am yet to have the briefing with relevant officers and, before making any further commitments, I do really need to understand the most sustainable methods and affordable methods for providing those products.

9.3.3 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Would the Minister perhaps look into making such products available on prescription, which is a pre-existing mechanism that could be used?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes, that is one of the mechanisms I myself have been thinking about but as yet I have not had the opportunity to get the briefing from officers around whether indeed that would be viable and achievable. If it is viable and achievable, then absolutely I would be inclined to look at that.

9.3.4 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Will the Minister be reviewing the performance measures that were used in rolling out the scheme and any gap analysis that was entitled in it?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes, I would be happy to do that. I was pleased that the original question referred to demonstrable outcomes. Outcomes is something that I am very keen to demonstrate and to measure and with that in mind I would be keen to take the review that the questioner referenced.

9.3.5 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Seeing that the Minister has expressed that she will be looking into the assessment of this scheme and looking at how to maybe amend it as such, will she commit to working with myself and other Assembly Members who are particularly interested in making sure this scheme is as successful as possible and working also with organisations already doing this type of work in the area to develop a better offering both in the sense of place but also in what kind of products and the education around the use and benefits of sustainable products, for example?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes, I am committed to working collaboratively with all Members of this Assembly and with the relevant stakeholders as required.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Before we come to the next question, I am going to announce the result of the elections for members of the States Employment Board. The number of votes cast for each candidate was as follows: the Connétable of St. Clement 31 votes, Deputy Ahier 23, Deputy Bailhache 18, Deputy Kovacs 16. The Connétable of St. Clement and Deputy Ahier have been elected. **[Approbation]**

9.4 Deputy I. Gardiner of the Minister for the Environment regarding the prospect of a ban of disposable vapes in Jersey. (OQ.18/2024)

Given the U.K. decision to ban disposable vapes to protect children and young people's health, will the Minister advise what consideration, if any, is being given to a similar ban in Jersey? Will he explain his current position regarding disposable vapes?

Deputy S.G. Luce of Grouville and St. Martin (The Minister for the Environment):

The previous Ministers for the Environment and Infrastructure have made a commitment to bring forward legislation to ban the use of single use vapes in 2024 with the intention of extending the Single-Use Plastics etc. (Restrictions) (Jersey) Law 2021 to cover these items and I will not be moving away from that commitment. Initial advice has been sought and received from the Law Officers' Department. Officers from Public Health, Recycling, Jersey Trading Standards, Treasury and Policy are working together to ensure all aspects are being taken into consideration. These include the wider tobacco strategy, a future tax potentially on vapes, impact on local businesses, importation from internet sales and enforcement to name a few. I look forward to getting a full briefing on this in due course so that I can consider it together with the rest of my priorities for the next 2 years but I commit to further discussing it with the new Minister for Health and Social Services and the Minister for Infrastructure to agree the easiest, quickest and best way forward.

9.4.1 Deputy I. Gardiner:

I thank the Minister for the answer and it is welcome in that the plans will progress. I would like to ask if the Minister is aware or has been told that since the announcement on 11th September, 5 months ago, it was suggested that consultation will take place. It is 5 months after the announcement. Is the Minister aware if consultation has been prepared and if not, what is the timeline he expects for the consultation to be lodged?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

As I said, I have not had a full briefing yet and I can say to the Deputy that I am not aware that a consultation has started yet. I do question the need for consultation on an issue such as this, but I do believe also that we have to take into consideration the fact that there are businesses in Jersey that sell these products and we need to speak to those people before we think of any ban. We have to consider the internet sales that come into the Island through the post. We might ban the sale in local shops and find that they are all imported from the U.K. so there are a number of considerations to put into the mix and, like I say to the Deputy, I can only report back once I have had a full briefing.

9.4.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

The question is slightly strange in the sense that it is predicated on health outcomes for young people, but it is being put to the Minister for the Environment, because the vapes themselves are single use plastics. Can I ask the Minister what is the motivation for the banning of single use vapes and what is the difference between a single use vape or a non-single use vape for the outcomes of children in the Island and why is it his responsibility to ensure health outcomes as a Minister for the Environment?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

The Deputy asks the same questions that I asked when the question landed on my desk, but to be honest this is an answer that could have been given equally by the Minister for Infrastructure or the Minister for Health and Social Services because I think we are all committed to this. We know that the sale of e-cigarettes in vapes is banned to children under the age of 18 and we want to continue that, but I think there is a case to be made for the quickest route to banning this product and stopping its sale would be to use the Single-Use Plastics etc. (Restrictions) (Jersey) Law 2021 and that may well be the reason why it is with me and the Minister for Infrastructure. I think if there is a

commitment made to do something there is then a requirement on us to find the easiest, quickest, and best way to achieve that.

9.4.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

Does the Minister not accept that this is very confusing and muddled policymaking if single use vapes are to be banned because they contain plastic? That is a completely different proposition from them being banned because they are harmful for the inhalation of children under 18. Could I ask the Minister to decide why he is banning single use vapes because they are plastic and also look at, for example, our own behaviour in this Assembly where we have disposable coffee cups where we used to have ceramic ones and we have lots of single use plastic in the States Assembly, which presumably also needs to be banned under the same law?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

Vaping products should really only be used by smokers to reduce, quit, or lower the risk of relapse back into smoking. We know that e-cigarettes and vapes are not products for children and they are banned for young people. It is important they are protected from their use. It is also important that they are protected from tobacco and that vaping does not lead to children starting to smoke. I have outlined the issues around the single use. The Deputy may be well aware that disposable vapes are a complex product, if we want to talk about the physical attributes of plastic, glass, a cardboard case, a heating element, a microprocessor. They contain a very small lithium ion battery and then of course the liquids inside, which are usually nicotine, benzoic acid, carbonyl and benzyl alcohol. They are difficult to dispose of. They can be a health risk for those people who are trying to dispose of them and of course they catch fire where they can have a problem with the dust carts and the incinerator. So there are a number of reasons, but as I explained earlier, if we make a decision to ban them then surely the quickest route to do that is the one to use.

9.4.4 The Connétable of St. Saviour:

I think my question has been partially asked by Deputy Tadier. The question was regarding disposable vapes, but surely all vapes that are available to children, either legally or illegally, should be stamped on. Will the Minister, in consultation with Ministerial colleagues, try to find the shortest route to stamp this out? With vapes with flavours like toffee apple, popcorn, and vanilla, it is no secret as to whom they are aimed at. Does the Minister not agree?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

I do agree. I can only reiterate e-cigarettes and vapes are not products for children and it is illegal to be sold.

[15:45]

9.4.5 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Can the Minister explain how ... he has mentioned of course the consultation with businesses who sell the vapes but how he will also consult with children and young people, because we are talking about them, and why I say that is because although we are saying for under-18s they are banned they do regularly have them. I know for example my son, not that I want to do him in, he regularly is on the school bus and there are a group of them at the back - not him - using the vapes, using disposable vapes and so it is readily available and accessible for children and young people. The question may have been lost in all of that. Could the Minister explain how he will bring the voice of children and young people into the consultation around this ban?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

It is a very interesting question; one I really have to say I had not considered. It is not usual for the police to engage in consultation with people who regularly speed and exceed the speed limits and in

this case it may be difficult to engage with young people who are, by vaping or smoking e-cigarettes, breaking the law. I guess their opinion is important and I guess they would also say, I would hazard to say, that they enjoy it. I would say to the Deputy, as a schoolchild who started smoking at the age of 13 or 14 and has not managed to stop yet, just because you enjoy it does not mean it is a good thing to do. I certainly regret it.

9.4.6 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I was not trying to suggest that he only consults with those youngsters who use disposable vapes, but also to include young people into this discussion about banning of disposable vapes, not just for health but also for the environmental impact as well. It is just bringing in young people's voices into this, because it is really important to hear their voices in all aspects when legislation is being built.

Deputy S.G. Luce:

I can only agree. I think we will find if we did ask a good cross-section of young people that some would say it is a good thing to do and they enjoy it, while others might say that they find it a great nuisance, they do not like the smell and they wish everybody would stop. I guess the more questions we ask the more different answers we would get, but, yes, they need to be spoken to and I am sure they will be.

9.4.7 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

The Minister is going to say that he is going to continue the policy of the previous Minister. Is he also going to pay close attention to the evidence that is now coming out from Australia who banned single use vapes as of 1st January and would he agree to talk to his neighbour, the Minister for External Relations, to get some real good research and evidence based upon the efficacy of the success or otherwise of the decision already taken by Australia on 1st January?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

One of the benefits of being a fast follower and not a leader is that you can take notice of other jurisdictions that have acted before you, and I am sure officers when they report to me in detail will also report on other jurisdictions that have placed this ban and the challenges that go with it.

9.4.8 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

I have no taste or smell, never smoked but did start vaping after a tragic situation in my life, and I do understand the issues that people are concerned about, but would he confirm that he is talking about vapes that contain tobacco, not the vapes that are not tobacco?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

We are talking about all vapes, whether they contain tobacco or not. Disposable vapes have challenges for the environment. They are thrown away. I say to the Deputy that rechargeable vapes also are challenging for the community and it is not just once you start recharging them. It is possible to recharge them with all sorts of products, some of which are not legal to be vaped or smoked in any form either.

9.4.9 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Does the Minister agree that commencing his child rights impact assessment at the earliest stage of policy development will help him to consider children's needs and their rights?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

As with most legislation, the more you consult before you move forward the better and the more time you save generally. I guess the answer to that is yes.

9.4.10 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Last year when I met Hautlieu School Council I asked them about their concerns and what we as politicians need to address. They have raised disposable vapes and mentioned the environmental and health impact. When I put this question I really thought to which Minister this question needed to be addressed, as it is going across Health, Environment and Infrastructure. Would the Minister indicate who he thinks needs to be the lead Minister for this piece of work?

Deputy S.G. Luce:

It is my understanding that the Minister who would act under the Single-Use Plastics etc. (Restrictions) (Jersey) Law 2021 would be the Minister for Infrastructure and in that case I guess he would be the lead Minister, but it is interesting to hear the Deputy's recounting of her interview speaking to children and if this is the last question I might just end with this quote, which is from Dr. Jeanelle de Gruchy, a good Jersey name, but the deputy chief medical officer for England, who says: "The message is clear, Sir. If the choice is between smoking and vaping, choose vaping. If the choice is between vaping and fresh air, choose fresh air."

9.5 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of the Minister for Social Security regarding the family friendly elements of the Employment (Jersey) Law 2003. (OQ.20/2024)

Given the Assembly's adoption of P.54/2019, as amended, will the Minister detail her plans to complete the review into family friendly elements of the Employment (Jersey) Law 2003, and how she intends to ensure the inclusion of a wide range of contributors?

Deputy L.V. Feltham (The Minister for Social Security):

From my initial briefings, I understand that the current work plan is set to complete the review in quarter one of this year and that the consultation period for the review concluded on 22nd December last year. I also understand that the Deputy had worked quite hard with the previous Minister to ensure that the consultation included more people from an early years background. I will be meeting with officers next week and during that I will be seeking assurances that the consultation was inclusive and has received a wide range of contributors in order to inform this important work.

9.5.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I thank the Minister for her answer and I believe and I hope the Minister agrees with me that the consultation should be extended as it did not go on for very long at all. Would the Minister commit to extending that consultation, if necessary, to ensure a wide range of contributors?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

If it transpires when I have briefings that the consultation did not get a wide range of contributors then, yes, I would be looking at potentially extending or looking at other ways to consult with such a wide range of contributors. Obviously I would need to say that if that was extended then the completion of the review may then be delayed and I would then also need to look at what impact that would have on other work. I am committed to inclusion, so I would be seeking the assurances that this consultation is as inclusive as possible and representatives from all sides are represented within that.

9.5.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

It may seem like a strange question that I am asking the new Minister for Social Security, but does she also accept that there are many families in Jersey that do not have children and just because a family unit does not have children it does not mean that they do not have the right to also have some consideration in a flexible working model? Would she consider perhaps looking to extend the traditional provisions to include flexible working more generally, and working models that reflect proper work-life balances for all workers in Jersey?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I thank the Deputy for his question. I think it is a very interesting area and I would be prepared to look at considerations of what could be done within the Employment Law around that area.

9.5.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Does the Minister at this stage, having initial briefings, know if data has been collected and know how many parents are taking their full year of leave?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I am sure the Deputy will appreciate I am looking through my briefing notes trying to see. I cannot see it in the notes that I have, but again I think that is important data and information to have, so that we can look at the success or otherwise of the legislation changes that were made and the supplementary programmes, such as the parental benefit that supports employers and employees to make the best use of that legislation. I will commit to getting back to the Deputy with that data, if I am able to provide it, and if I do not have the data at the moment I will ask officers if we can seek it.

9.5.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Minister for committing that she will share the data with me but also with the Assembly when she is able to get it. Drilling down further into that data, I think it will be important to understand how many fathers are taking their full leave and, if not, why they are not taking that leave and understand the barriers to that. I would like to ask the Minister if it is possible to look specifically further into the data and look at if fathers take the full leave and if not, why not.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes, I would also be more than happy to look at that. It was an important part of the update of the Employment Law, that rights were extended not just to birth mothers but second parents as well and I think it is important to look at that data.

9.5.5 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Would the Minister share her views how long she thinks is the best for the child to be cared for at home by parents?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

My own personal view is that it is as long as possible that the parents wish to spend at home with that child. I know people's personal circumstances very often mean that they do have to return to employment before they may feel ready. I was very fortunate to have a very long maternity leave with my daughter and having that time was very important to me. I appreciate that I was in a privileged position to be able to do that. I would seek to work to enable as many parents as possible to spend as much time as they can with their children. At the end of the day, it is a decision for each parent in consideration of their own circumstances and what might be best for them as well.

9.5.6 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Would the Minister agree that the considerations are, most of the time, funds-related and it is not really a choice, but a choice between bringing food home and wages and care for the child? What is she going to do about it?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes, I would agree with the Deputy's statement that very often decisions are made on the basis of cost, so what I can do about it is fairly limited, but I am happy to talk around that around the Council of Ministers' table, as well as look at further improvements to the employment legislation that meets the needs of employers as well as employees, to try to improve the options for people with young children.

9.5.7 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Following on from that question, if it does emerge from the consultation that families are not able to access this leave with their children because they cannot afford to take that time off from work, where would the Minister propose the funding should come from to support more paid parental leave?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I am not yet in a position where I have been able to see more detailed budgets for my own department or discuss budgets across the table at the Council of Ministers, so I am unable to answer that question at this point in time.

9.6 Deputy K.M. Wilson of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding an evidence-based approach to developing healthcare in the Island. (OQ.26/2024)

Will the Minister advise what consideration he is giving, if any, to an evidence-based approach to developing healthcare in the Island and outline the areas where he would consider applying this approach?

[16:00]

Deputy T. Binet of St. Saviour (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

No doubt there are some challenging supplementaries that sit behind that question because it seems a little too obvious in the first instance. I think most right-minded thinking people would seek to use evidence-based approaches to most things, particularly when it comes to healthcare, so yes, going forward, that would be my preferred approach. I have to say that that would probably be my preferred approach in pretty much every area.

9.6.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Could the Minister explain what his views are on the quality, reliability, and validity of the evidence provided by the Royal College of Physicians in relation to the rheumatology review?

Deputy T. Binet:

I have to confess only 4 days into office I have not had a chance to read the complete review, but I have had a briefing on it, and I think the outstanding thing that stuck out for me was not just what happened in the Rheumatology Department, but the question that struck me was how did we get to this? That relates to a number of concerns I have over governance procedures.

9.6.2 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

I hope the Minister will not mind me reflecting that there have been a number of discussions held by the previous Council on the actions, the serious issues at the hospitals, and I hear him when he says that the report, which I have read, does point towards a bigger culture. Does he signal therefore that the importance of having a system whereby what was known and talked about for a long time but never reported, in terms of rheumatology, I am told, and that the board and the governance structures that were being put in and now seem to be resulting in proper analysis by experts, is really important to get on with and stick with, in order to give patients confidence for what are lifechanging situations? In other words, is he going to stick with the governance model and in fact put it on steroids so that it is even faster to fix the problems that he has identified?

Deputy T. Binet:

I have to say that I am in broad agreement with what has just been said. I do not know if you can put governance procedures on steroids, but if we can I think that is what we would be looking to do.

9.6.3 Deputy M.R. Scott:

Whether the Minister is putting the governance procedures on steroids or not, will he be considering the Comptroller and Auditor General's recommendations in this area, given that they remain unimplemented even now?

Deputy T. Binet:

I think that has to be a yes as well.

9.6.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Can the Minister outline his initial thoughts as to how these areas will be well governed?

Deputy T. Binet:

The comment "these areas" if the Deputy could be a little bit more specific that would be helpful.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Yes, Deputy Jeune. Do you want to particularise your question?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Well, the areas that he considers applying the evidence-based approach. In the question it says: "... and outline the areas where he would consider applying this approach" and he said all areas he would be considering doing evidence-based approach, and this was related to governance. So my question is to ask the Minister how he will initially outline how these areas or this approach will be well governed. So asking him to answer that question around when he is talking about how it is well governed or the governance around it, what does that mean? Can he explain it further?

Deputy T. Binet:

In the broadest of senses I think that means ensuring that we have a full and comprehensive set of governance procedures from one end of the organisation to the other. It is difficult to be completely specific about that, other than to say that for there to be proper governance it has to be throughout the whole of the organisation. There cannot be any grey areas.

9.6.5 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think specifically focusing in on the rheumatology report, can the Minister outline the actions he will take to prevent further issues around clinical safety, for example, in this area?

Deputy T. Binet:

These are very early days for me, as I say, but it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that we might consider commissioning a review of the governance procedures, an immediate review, in the same way as we have reviewed the activities of the Rheumatology Department. I think what it has revealed is quite a staggering lack of proper governance and that is something I need to discuss. As I say, it is too early days for me to know the full implications of that and the cost of it, but I think it is something that is going to be coming up for some consideration.

9.6.6 The Connétable of St. Mary:

During a public hearing conducted by the Hospital Review Panel during the last Assembly, reference was made to as much as 25 per cent of Jersey residents having the benefit of private health insurance. Does the Minister agree with that assessment? If so, and even if not, is he planning to take further steps with a view to managing private health expectations within the public service and with a view to avoiding unnecessary drainage on the public purse?

The Deputy Bailiff:

That is a long way from the question, the Connétable of St. Mary. It is too far from the question. I do not allow that question.

9.6.7 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

I will try. With the benefit of hindsight, which is always a good thing - Captain Hindsight is always right, normally - would the Minister agree that without the governance board being in place it is more likely than not that this longstanding concern in rheumatology would not have been uncovered, investigated and the report that he has now got on his desk done? Secondly, if the link is between the governance board and, as he has rightly said, looking into other areas, will he consider the cost implications, the cost to the health service, of lots of costs of people claiming malpractice, let alone the misery that people have been put through by bad prescribing and put that in the overall picture of cost? Because on the one side we had criticisms of the cost of the governance but it does seem, and he said it himself, that it has worked and we need more of it.

Deputy T. Binet:

I think I am correct in saying that the Deputy is confusing a number of issues and principally the issue of the rheumatology investigation, which I am pretty certain was launched quite a long time before the establishment of the board, so it is my understanding that the 2 things are not necessarily connected.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Yes, but this is a question about an evidence-based approach to developing healthcare. Are there any supplementary questions arising from that question?

9.6.8 Deputy A. Curtis of St. Clement:

The Minister has said that all areas will be evidence-based, so will he provide a timetable to publishing any unpublished evidence used in the new healthcare facilities to States Members and what that timetable will be?

Deputy T. Binet:

I do not think I can do an ad hoc timetable for anything at this point in time. I just think that is perhaps not reasonable.

9.6.9 Deputy A. Curtis:

In that case, is the Minister happy to commit to publishing as much of any unpublished information on the new healthcare facilities to enable Members to make evidence-based decisions as well as himself?

Deputy T. Binet:

I have to say in all honesty I am not aware that we have withheld any evidence of any merit whatsoever, so I am happy to talk to the team about anything they have kept to themselves, but to the best of my knowledge we have not withheld anything that is of any relevance to the scheme.

9.6.10 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

The Minister just mentioned a review of governance. Would he agree to producing those proposals and sharing those with the Assembly in a timely way?

Deputy T. Binet:

Yes, if that is something that we can do and it is feasible to do, then I would be more than happy to share that with Members of the Assembly.

9.7 Deputy J. Renouf of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the prospect of hospital services being subject to regulatory control of the Jersey Care Commission. (OQ.16/2024)

Will the Minister confirm whether he supports the proposed legislative timetable that, if approved, would bring hospital services under the regulatory control of the Jersey Care Commission by the start of 2025, with the hospital subject to inspection by the J.C.C. (Jersey Care Commission) later in 2025, and if not, why not?

Deputy T. Binet (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

I could answer that with a simple yes, but I suspect the Deputy might want a little bit more than that. As the Deputy knows, the legislation for this area sits with the Environment Department and obviously when the question came in I called a very swift meeting with the Minister for the Environment and we had a short briefing on the Care Commission. As I say, I am due to have a much more comprehensive briefing later on, but from the information I gleaned from the briefing that I have had the answer is a firm yes.

9.7.1 Deputy J. Renouf:

The question was motivated by an answer in the hustings where the Minister indicated he was not sure whether he supported that. The reason why it falls under both is because we have funded under the Government Plan a joint Health Ministry and Environment Ministry funding bid, which was passed by the Assembly in 2022 to fund preparatory work for that inspection. Will he therefore commit to bringing forward draft legislation by the third quarter of this year, sticking to the timetable currently in the Government Plan?

Deputy T. Binet:

Yes, I see no reason why that should not be the case. As I say, in terms of the timing I have to assume that everything is in place for that to be achieved, but if it is, the answer is yes. If I can just clarify a little bit about having some reservations about the Jersey Care Commission. It is quite right that I did voice some concern but I have been assured that the inspections are due to take place by the Care Quality Commission seconded from the U.K., and that was my concern and that has been allayed. I am happy with that.

Deputy J. Renouf:

Sir, I think that might be inadvertently misleading the Assembly. It is the Jersey Care Commission under the legislation that will undertake the inspections I believe with assistance from the Care Quality Commission in the U.K., but the legislation is I believe quite clear on that.

Deputy T. Binet:

It would appear that I have been incorrectly briefed in that case, but I will certainly make certain to find out what the details are and get back to the Deputy so that we can both be absolutely clear on what the intentions are.

9.7.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

This discussion has just prompted me to ask the question and if the Minister is not able to answer in full now, but why would the hospital be put under a different system than the Jersey Care Commission, which is a legislation specifically built for Jersey and for Jersey institutions and as someone said a couple of times, but as chair of J.A.Y.F. we are trying to strive towards being registered under the Care Commission, and many organisations and charities have also had to register under the Jersey Care Commission at great expense. It would seem very strange that the main hospital in Jersey would then take a different route than the legislation that has been specifically

developed for Jersey. Could the Minister explain why there is a choice of a different system than the one developed in Jersey?

Deputy T. Binet:

I think at this point in time we are at odds about our understanding of what the intentions are. Why would you use an independent inspection service to carry out the inspection? Because it is possible the inspections, as I understand it, are exceptionally complicated. In my view, I would have thought it would be sensible for them to be carried out by people who inspect hospitals all the time and know exactly what they are doing. If you have a team of people here who you have got to train up in all the complexity to inspect the hospital once every 3 years, or whenever the inspections take place, it would be, I suggest, an extremely expensive business and not a terribly effective one, given that your inspectors will not necessarily be current for the inspection purposes. I think there is some clarification that is required and I am certainly happy to get that clarification and feed that back to all interested parties.

9.7.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think exactly there needs to be a clarification because it is one thing bringing in inspectors that have specific expertise but it is another putting under which legislation, and of course the quality control in the U.K. is under a different legislation than the Jersey Care Commission.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Are you coming to a question or are you making an observation?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

No, Sir, therefore could we get clarification as soon as possible from the Minister, please, on what is going to happen?

Deputy T. Binet:

I thought I made it very plain in my last answer that I would get clarification as soon as I can but I shall reconfirm that I am prepared to get clarification as soon as possible.

9.7.4 Deputy J. Renouf:

I think the reason why we can have confidence that the J.C.C. can do this job is because the funding bid, to which I referred earlier, was precisely to build up capacity within the J.C.C. to achieve the ability to do that. Given that the Mascie-Taylor review and the recent rheumatology report both identified serious problems with oversight and highlighted a culture of consultants that did not benchmark the clinical oversight, what reassurance can he give the Assembly and the public that independent governance, which might include these kinds of inspections, will be a priority?

[16:15]

Deputy T. Binet:

I am not quite sure how that relates to the initial question. Perhaps it is relevant, but I do not mind answering anyway. I would have hoped that I had made sufficient statements this afternoon to indicate that governance is a key area of concern, possibly the primary one, and that I shall be doing all I can to make sure that, going back to the initial question, we put the process on steroids. I do not think I can offer much more than that at this stage.

9.8 Deputy G.P. Southern of the Chief Minister regarding the undertaking of a review of options to convert the Minimum Wage to a Living Wage. (OQ.27/2024)

Following the adoption of P.78/2022 and the response to Written Question 49/2023, will the Chief Minister agree to undertake a review of options to convert the minimum wage to a living wage by

December 2024, ensuring that such a review takes into account the impact of rental levels on relative low incomes, and if not, why not?

Deputy L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister):

Members will be aware that the previous Minister for Social Security published a review R.181/2023 at the end of last year. The review set out the reasons for continuing to work towards the existing States Assembly commitment of bringing the minimum wage up to a living wage at a level of two-thirds of the median wage. In light of this existing commitment, I do not see the need for a further review at present, but I would like to say that I will be discussing this commitment with the Minister for Social Security and other Ministers as a whole before further action can be agreed. I think it is very much a conversation that needs to be had on that.

9.8.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

The issue I think around this question is, one, of timescale and, second, I do not believe anybody has done any work to evaluate the contribution that the high rental levels have on policy markers, and I believe that is 2 aspects that should be addressed in this consultation.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Is there a question at the end of that? You normally add: "Do you agree?"

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Would the Minister agree?

The Deputy Bailiff:

There we are. Do you agree?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

I agree that there are indeed many ways of calculating a living wage. If we look at what we call the Caritas living wage which is £13.41, which is based on the London living wage plus 2 per cent, then we have our calculations based on two-thirds of the median wage. We could have a review that says we need to recalculate that and come to a different formula. I am not sure that is right and I want to discuss that with the Minister for Social Security, who will need to take advice as I am, I am sure, and I think that is a matter that needs to come to the Council of Ministers in short order, given the timescale.

9.8.2 Deputy A. Curtis:

The Chief Minister in his hustings stated that he believed certain businesses will need financial support during the transition to a living wage. Will the Chief Minister share in what form he expects this financial support to come, and if he does not see a need for a further review what consultation he will do in finding out the answer to that?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

I did caveat that the living wage, if we are going to introduce it, in line with the States commitment, we need to ensure that businesses are provided with financial support to help bridge the gap over a period of time, so we avoid job losses or damage to business or even lose businesses as a result. I do not know what financial support looks like to business. It could take on a number of different forms from direct financial contribution to payroll. We have had experience with payroll schemes during COVID, or perhaps social security reductions on employees that fall into certain categories, but that is a piece of work that needs to be done.

9.8.3 Deputy A. Curtis:

As the Chief Minister is not entirely sure how to do it, does he not think that a review would be a good option?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

I think we are running out of room on the shelf for reviews. I have only been in office a few days. I do not think we need a review. I think we need to sit around a table with our officers. We are quite capable of producing something internally.

9.8.4 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

In view of that very can-do attitude, would the Minister, who I know is another member of the Council of Ministers who likes the *Economist* article, consider reading the *Economist* article: "Britain's failed experiment in boosting low wage sectors" which at the heart of it struck at the Brexiteers' plan to build a high-wage, high-skill economy? The article explains that they have failed, upon evidence. In other words, will his Government use the economic adviser, bring some people quickly and I will send him the article, to understand how we can get to a living wage, high wages with high productivity, with more than just words and promises and making some sectors of our economy completely unproductive, unprofitable and therefore requiring what I shuddered when I heard him say it, potentially bailing them out? Would he agree to have a meeting with me about my views, because I have got some?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

If the Deputy sends me the article I shall endeavour to read it at some stage in the weeks ahead. I do not make light of that. Also, yes, I have a lot of time and respect for the economic adviser and his team who will be playing a key part in advising Ministers as we move forward to try to achieve what this Assembly has been promising for years. In relation to having a meeting with Deputy Ozouf, yes, of course I will. If he would like to make contact we will get something lined up, and I look forward to it.

9.8.5 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

The article takes 5 minutes to listen to when he is walking his dog at St. Ouen, and I hope to go with him on his walk to explain to him what it means. I understand the pressure that he is going to be under, his Government is going to be under, to bring the living wage in but the experiment that has happened in the U.K. has largely failed and we spoke about productivity earlier. We must not and I do not want his Government to fail. I want them to succeed but there is a way of doing it, and this explains it.

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

I thank the Deputy for his kind remarks and if he would like to meet me at 6.30 a.m. tomorrow morning at the bottom entrance of Val de la Mare car park he can accompany me on the dog walk and he can tell me all about it.

Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

I will be there.

9.8.6 Deputy J. Renouf:

Following Deputy Curtis' question, if the Chief Minister cannot identify a way to support businesses that struggle with a living wage can he identify the business sectors that he thinks might need help?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

I did not say I could not identify a formula. I could identify off the top of my head a number of formulas, but that would not be good governance to do that. We are going to do things properly this

time. We are going to get proper advice. We are going to debate it around the Council of Ministers' table and then we are going to bring it to this Assembly, and that is how we are going to do it. Industries that I think will need support are likely to include agriculture, tourism and hospitality, perhaps retail and any other employers that have larger payrolls where below minimum wage hourly rates are being paid.

9.8.7 Deputy J. Renouf:

Does the Chief Minister not accept, slightly contrary perhaps to Deputy Ozouf's point, that if we do not have a living wage that persuades employers to meet what is a decent standard of living for citizens in this Island, that we will effectively be subsidising through other means the payment of low wages and failing to encourage employers to drive up productivity?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

No, I do not and if I have not been clear I apologise. A minimum wage is to prevent exploitation. A living wage is to improve the standard of living. Now, what I am saying is not a permanent financial package. It is bridging support to help some employers to bridge the gap to allow them time to restructure their workforce and restructure their pay rates throughout their organisations, to ensure that they are not put under undue financial stress during this journey, which could lead to job losses, or even worse, some businesses closing down.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Was your light on, Deputy Tadier?

Deputy M. Tadier:

It was, Sir. You are being very indulgent today, Sir. The normal Bailiff would have cut us off by now.

The Deputy Bailiff:

I am always very kind to you, Deputy Tadier.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I do not need to ask my question.

Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

Point of order, you are not the normal Bailiff. You are the Deputy Bailiff, are you not?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Well, let us put that to one side. Any final supplementary, Deputy Southern?

9.8.8 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Yes, the eternal supplementary which is always, when you finish with your conversations with or without Deputy Ozouf, will you circulate the document that results to myself and Members?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

Of course, but I would reiterate conversations need to be had with the Minister for Social Security and advice will need to be taken and it will need to come to the Council of Ministers. When we have done that process we will share with all Members and I think the Minister for Social Security can make sure that her colleague, Deputy Southern, will be the first to receive updates.

9.9 Deputy G.P. Southern of the Minister for Housing and Communities regarding the long-term plans for Les Cinq Chênes Estate. (OQ.28/2024)

Just to show that we give nobody any breaks whatsoever. Will the Minister advise the long-term plans, if any, for Les Cinq Chênes estate and existing occupiers; and explain why rental tenants are expected to tolerate substandard damp conditions, when houses earmarked for sale are being renovated and fully insulated before sale?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec (The Minister for Housing and Communities):

Let us be clear that tenants up at Les Cinq Chênes should not be expected to tolerate substandard, damp conditions, irrespective of what the short or long-term plans for that estate are. I am due to meet with Andium Homes on Thursday where I will raise the matter. I know of at least one constituency case that has made its way to me to discuss that. The long-term plans for the sanction, as it currently stands, is that Andium is hoping to redevelop the site except for 30 homes which have been earmarked for sale through the Andium Homebuy scheme, which is their first-time buyers' shared-equity scheme. All of that is dependent on several things, Ministerial approval being one of those, acquiring the sites nearby that have been earmarked in the bridging Island Plan for development and a plan to ensure that those who currently live in rental homes there are assisted into even better homes elsewhere when they are available and all of that is of course subject to many different conditions. As I said at the start of my answer, I do not think it is an excuse for neglecting any kind of maintenance of the homes while there are families still living in them. They should continue to meet all of the standards that we would expect there and I will raise that with them at my next meeting with them.

9.9.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Is the Minister aware whether these have been passed, as it were, as fit for human habitation through Environmental Health? Certainly my impression is that many of these houses are not fit.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I do not know if Environmental Health have officially declared that to be the case for those homes. If that is the case that they have done so then that is clearly unacceptable and Andium will certainly be hearing words from me to instruct them that that ought to be rectified at the soonest possible point. I would also say that when homes fall beneath minimum standards and the home becomes either wholly or partially uninhabitable there is a clause in the Residential Tenancy Law that would affect the amount of rent that tenants would be obliged to pay for that, so if that is not an incentive to get those fixed sooner rather than later I do not know what is.

9.9.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

It will look like a planted question, but I just got my laptop open and I have got Article 9 of the Residential Tenancy Law, and my question is when the Minister goes around to see the tenants of Les Cinq Chênes will he be reminding them of their rights under Article 9 of that law which says that when a unit becomes inhabitable through any other event than malicious damage or act by the tenant, the tenant is not required to pay any rent or any other amount payable under the agreement in respect of any time that the residential unit is uninhabitable? It also applies if it is partly uninhabitable. They can get a partial refund on their rent. Does he think that is a good incentive for all landlords in Jersey, not just Andium, to get their property in order, if they are going to lose money through it?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Indeed, that is the law. That is what it says, and that is a right that tenants currently have under the Residential Tenancy Law, that they are not required to pay rent if part or the whole of their home becomes uninhabitable. The only caveat that I would put on that is that that law itself does not clearly define what uninhabitable means there, so it would be very important before any tenant took action

on that that they made sure that they had a substantial basis underpinning it for any decision like that. I would say a report from Environmental Health confirming that the home is at least partly uninhabitable would hopefully constitute that. I would just advise them to be careful about making sure they interpret that law and do not end up putting themselves at further risk by misinterpreting it.

[16:30]

9.9.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

Would the Minister look to go back perhaps with his officers and to find that there is a legal opinion given on the floor of this Assembly by one of the law officers, I think it was an Attorney General and I will not say who it was because I cannot quite remember, explaining what the meaning of “uninhabitable” was and perhaps using that as a starting point for any potential legal action that they may wish to embark on?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Indeed. If there is a clear legal opinion on that, that would be very helpful but I would still recommend to any tenant who felt that they had to invoke their rights under that law to try to seek advice in one form or another before doing so, just to make sure that they are totally protected. There is the Environmental Health Department who have the powers to instruct landlords to make repairs and undertake maintenance on properties when they fall beneath minimum standards and there are sanctions that they can apply if that does not happen. Also we have the Housing Advice Service, which has blossomed in recent years to be a very good outlet for people getting advice that they need, and I would certainly recommend any tenants who think they have got an issue to engage with that service, who can help them be informed of their rights.

9.9.4 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

Having lived throughout the time I have lived in Jersey in the vicinity of Five Oaks I am very well acquainted with the area. Would the Deputy, now that we all know about the St. Helier Deputy blocked vote, there are 5 St. Saviour Deputies, one Deputy Chief Minister who is a Deputy of St. Saviour and we have our Constable, of course. Would he agree to meet with us? The issues that are raised at Les Cinq Chênes, I am not sure in his recent times whether he has been aware of the scale of difficulties that good people are having from not only damp conditions but other issues, and would he work with the Deputies and meet us in early course after maybe the 6.30 a.m. run with the Chief Minister, he can do it tomorrow if he wants, but seriously meet with us, because all of the St. Saviour Deputies have got views and I am sure that we can help him and contribute, with our Constable?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I would be very keen to do that, not least because I have very fond memories of Les Cinq Chênes as well. I practically grew up there, even though I did not live there, but all of my friends were there. I spent lots of time there. I have not spent a lot of time there very recently though but given that there is a suggestion of long-term plans for that area I do not think it would be right to pursue any plans for that without proper engagement with the St. Saviour representatives, and I am more than happy to be involved in any kind of discussion on that.

9.9.5 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Just to thank the Minister for taking this issue particularly seriously and to encourage him to meet both with myself and with St. Saviour Deputy representatives in order to bring some sort of conclusion to what is really lamentable standards being administered by Andium, who take great pride in building homes which are fit for people, but in this case they have let themselves down.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Is there a question there, Deputy Southern?

Deputy G.P. Southern:

I will leave it at that, Sir.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, as I mentioned, I am meeting Andium on Thursday where I intend to raise some of these issues as an early starting point, but at that I may also suggest to them that I have a site visit as soon as possible and I would want to include those who have expressed an interest in this area as well. I will give that undertaking and we will have that first conversation when I next speak to Andium.

9.10 Deputy I. Gardiner of the Minister for Children and Education regarding implementation of the Further Education and Skills Actionable Agenda. (OQ.19/2024)

Regarding the C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) publication *Further Education and Skills Actionable Agenda*, published in December 2022, will the Minister explain his plan for implementing the technical education action to raise the participation age to 18, with a corresponding entitlement and requirement for all young people to be in full-time education, or employment with training?

Connétable R.P. Vibert of St. Peter (The Minister for Children and Education):

The question will be answered by the Assistant Minister who will be shortly the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Yes.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Apology, Assistant Minister. It is skills agenda. If I understand it correct, the skills agenda will be under the Minister for Children and Families and Skills.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Do you want to shed any light on that?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

If I am wrong, I am happy to be corrected.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

No, we are happy that it falls under the Minister for Education, Sir.

The Deputy Bailiff:

All right. Are you content to accept an answer from Deputy Rob Ward? He has obviously prepared an answer.

Deputy R.J. Ward (Assistant Minister for Children and Education - rapporteur):

I thank the Deputy for the question. There is a context to this answer. In 2019 when I chaired the education panel, one of the first reviews was in post-16 education and recommendation 14 at that time was to increase the school leaving age to 18 for formal education. In the question, the *Further Education and Skills Actionable Agenda* it is recommendation 1, that is from December 2022. I am in support of the principle of raising the age of participation to 18, but there obviously have been obstacles in the 4 years since the first recommendation of this happening. I think this is a juxtaposition between the provision that is available for young people and the regulation or legislation that may be needed. For context again, over 80 per cent of our young people do continue to 18, or as we would call it, key stage 5, but that smaller but significant number perhaps do not, and there is

a lot of evidence to say that keeping people in education to 18 definitely improves outcomes and is better for all of us.

9.10.1 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you to the Assistant Minister for his answer and it is reassuring that the Assistant Minister is willing to extend education to 18. The Assistant Minister mentioned legislation and he mentioned provision but the Assistant Minister did not mention funding. Will the Assistant Minister be preparing a business case for submission to the next Government Plan to assure that funding can be put in place to provide education or training provision for young people up to 18?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I thank the Deputy for the supplementary. In the 2024 Government Plan there is, I believe, £3.85 million put aside to address those key targeted areas who do not carry on into education until 18. Yes, there will be a requirement for funding into the future, but I think we have to look at the provision that we have now and I think we have 2 choices in addressing this. We can try to change the legislation, which may take some time because legislative drafting is one of those things that happens, or we can change by regulation. The Education Law 1999, part 1, section 2, part 3, does say that this can be changed by regulation by the States Assembly. That might be a quicker pathway. But that will come with a requirement for funding. However, there is a lot in place already which may be available. It also comes with some perhaps knock-on effects to other laws and legislation, so we have to be cognisant of that. The preparation work has been done though in many areas there and I await policy options that we can be taking forward. I will say, in the first week, it is probably not necessarily on my agenda this week.

9.10.2 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Does the Assistant Minister agree with me that as well as extending the education entitlement upwards to 18, we should also be looking to extend children's education entitlement downwards and offering universally to all 2 to 3 year-olds in the Island?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

This question is about 16 to 18, which I certainly agree with. In terms of the provision downward, yes, that would be an ideal situation for us on this Island. However, we have to think about what we mean by formal education. Education in the form of play, in socialisation, I believe is just as important as any formalised assessed education at that age because that is so important for our young people. To get back into the 16 to 18 agenda, there are some real benefits and they are recognised in jurisdictions around the world. Just to give one piece of information on that, which I have found interesting from research, if you leave school at 16 you are very unlikely, but about 16 per cent of those people who did not reach the basic standards that we would require in terms of literacy and numeracy, for example, reach those levels. If you stay until 18, 60 per cent of those people will get a second chance and do that. So it is an investment in our future. It is an investment in our Island and it is certainly the best thing to do if we are genuinely looking at lifelong learning and having a skilled population.

9.10.3 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I am delighted the Assistant Minister agrees with my ethos around play-based care and education and would he commit to pursuing the extension of this entitlement downwards as well and to pursuing the funding to action this?

The Deputy Bailiff:

It is a question in relation to age 18; it is not an early years question, but do you want to add anything, Deputy?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, it just will not be as prepared an answer. In principle, yes, that is exactly it. But there is some detail to be looked at there: can we provide that provision, how do we provide it, where do we provide it? But I am glad that the Deputy and I agree that play-based is the key. The last thing I would want to see is the sort of formalised education that started in the U.K. where children were assessed at some ridiculously young age and then from that level onwards were given a target or a flight path which they had to in some way continue along for the rest of their educational existence. That does not work. It is not the best thing to do in education, and it is not what is best for our children.

9.10.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Will the Assistant Minister outline what he believes is required to be done to meet all the actions from the published actionable agenda from December 2022 to ensure that all young people up to the age of 18 have equal opportunity to access education and training?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

As I mentioned before, that over 80 per cent already do that. But it is sounds hard to get numbers beyond that 80 per cent are the key things. There are a whole myriad of things that need to be addressed there. First of all, we need to keep young people in school to the age of 16 and help them find that they are successful. We have a significant but small group who do not find mainstream school perhaps the best opportunity for them. That needs to be addressed. But then there are a number of things that happen through the Next Steps programme, for example, which provides support prior to statutory leaving age to try to encourage young people to stay in the education system and access education. That can be through careers, from mentoring, things like the Princes Trust even. There are a whole myriad of things here, ongoing support for your chosen pathway, for example, and that specialised pathway for young people who perhaps do not fit into our traditional education system I think is the way in which we encourage people to stay in education, succeed in education and training, and succeed both in the workplace and in our society. Because the option is, if that does not happen, it is much more expensive in the long run, much more damaging and much less successful for our economy and our productivity in the long term, if these young people do not stay and do not succeed in education.

9.10.5 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Will the Minister just confirm, because it was a bit confusing at the beginning, that obviously some of this actionable agenda also has recommendations for skills, including adults, and will the Minister be responsible also for those actions as well?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

One of the things I wanted, I am not particularly interested in titles, but lifelong learning I think is a very important key, which links into our sustainable economy, for example. So, yes, I thank the Deputy for mentioning that. We do need to look at the future of accessing education and training, career changes, for example. I know people who have made a very brave decision to change their career as they get older and it is not easy. If we can enable that, training our own is the way forward to be successful on this Island, to be more productive and to use our education to its fullest. But, yes, that will need some thought. That will need some investment. But it also needs some smart use of the skills that we have. We have very talented people in our post-16 provision, both in all of our schools and at Highlands College in particular, and we need to use their skills to the best we possibly can and support people throughout their life and working life to succeed where they can.

[16:45]

9.10.6 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

I wonder if the Assistant Minister could give an early indication about his willingness to look into T levels as a way of really helping young people for whom the right choice is not A levels, but it is really good, and now I notice that the U.K. is rolling out, there is an oven-ready plan with a curriculum for T levels in all sorts of exciting areas, which have a benefit. I think he knows the answer. Will he put that one on steroids?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I am very pleased to be able to put down any notes and talk about T levels. How long have I got? T levels are technical qualifications which are intended to bridge the gap between vocational and academic education. Personally, I think there is a false dichotomy between technical, between vocational and academic education. In any profession, medicine for example, yes, there is a huge academic need, but there are huge vocational needs. I want somebody who knows their way around the human body if they are my doctor but I also want him to have a good bedside manner, for example. T levels though are being tested in U.K. One of the obstacles that we will face with T levels is the need for specific and very long and detailed work placement examples. Now I personally believe, and this is not policy on the hoof, but I have looked into this and had quite extensive conversations before with people when I was doing the Education panel, that we could perhaps offer some of these, if they fit in, in certain sectors of our economy, but we have an opportunity to see whether they are successful first in the U.K. We also have to be very cognisant of the fact that B.T.E.C. (Business and Technology Education Council), the traditional vocational route, may not be continuing if T levels take over in the U.K. However, B.T.E.C. could still exist in an international form. So there are some big choices ahead but the knowledge of T levels, the knowledge of vocational education, and the knowledge of examples, for example, is something that I can bring to this role and I hope that we can anticipate and be ahead of the game before we need to make those decisions, because that is the important thing that we have to do.

9.10.7 Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf:

Is the Minister aware that the U.K. has already started, in September 2022, T levels in accounting, design, finance, maintenance, insulation, management and administration, and now in 2023, last year, agriculture and land management, animal care, all these things, all things that are highly relevant to skills sought in Jersey, and would he use his new position, with his Minister and the rest of the Council of Ministers, to get some pilot T level qualifications? I am delighted to hear that his enthusiasm is like the previous Minister's, it is almost exactly the same thing, because the last Minister was just as excited about T levels when I mentioned them. But we have to start rolling them out because they are the solution and will he commit to putting them on steroids and getting at least some courses up and running as fast as possible?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

I thank the Deputy. You can also add a very important T level, which is in health and social care, which is very useful for the Island. I do not think we should commit in that way yet; we need to take advantage of the fact that we can see how they work. They have just started. We need to see whether they are successful, how successful they are, whether they fit our economy, whether they fit our provision, whether they fit our employers, whether they fit our young people. Because, if they do not, then we could be going down a pathway where we lose what we have now that works without replacing it. I would be supportive of trials when we come up with the information that that is possible and I think that we have a number of areas of our economy where these trials could work very well. Just one final thing on this, we need to be sure that those levels give access to further education beyond there as well, they are accepted by universities, not just in the U.K., but Europe-wide and worldwide. That is a mistake that could be made if we are not careful, and that would be a very bad mistake for our young people going into the future.

9.10.8 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Could the Minister outline what engagement he will have with economic partners to develop an alignment with the skills development and economic requirements of the Island?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is a very good question from the Deputy. One of the things I hope is happening in this Government is also an alignment with other Ministers. There is a Minister for Sustainable Economic Development and I think it is very important that we understand where the need is as much as anything on this Island, where the need is both in terms of our economy from employers and, as somebody who has dealt with health, would know that, for example, nursing and training our own in nursing, training healthcare professionals, training health assistants, for example, is one really good example of that. So engagement with those people who can provide the training, provide the opportunities, and have the need, I think is a very important part of solving the issue we have with some recruitment areas in this Island. If we train our own and we do it well to a high standard using everything that is available, we have a much better chance of retaining those staff because they have buy-in on the Island and every penny spent on that, and this is my bid in advance, I look across at the Chief Minister, where every penny spent on that is a huge return on that investment for this Island.

9.10.9 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Does the Minister consider that this will be necessary to contribute to the wider development of the workforce plan for the Island and how does he intend to feed his work into the development of that plan?

Deputy R.J. Ward:

Yes, absolutely. To stand here 5 days in, to tell you how precisely I am going to feed in that into the workforce plan would be slightly difficult for me. However, the key principle of making sure we know where the gaps are, what provision we have now, because there is provision now. There is provision across our education system, they are very successful. We have huge successes with our young people going forward. But what we need to do is fine tune that, use the best economy as it changes, and what we must remember as well, if we got to a point where it is 100 per cent correct and we have solved the problem, the world will constantly change, so we will need to constantly change our education system with it. What we do not want to do to it is throw change at educators. The worst thing you can do for teachers and educators is to have sudden change and uncontrolled change because they are fed up with it. They have seen it with curriculum for too many years, they have seen it with assessment for too many years, and they have seen it with the way in which they are meant to teach for too many years. So, yes, it needs to be a controlled, intelligent approach. It is integral to our workforce that we get education right for those people.

9.10.10 Deputy I. Gardiner:

I am delighted to hear answers from the Assistant Minister just to the clarity and my understanding and the Assembly's understanding going forward. *Further Education and Skills Actionable Agenda* has 37 actions, which are divided into 16-19 technical education, skills and education post-19, apprenticeship, higher technical and professional education, higher education, department structure and employee engagement. The question to the Assistant Minister, if he will be responsible for deliverable actions from the actionable agenda or this will be divided and, if it will be divided, how the officer would know with whom to work on it.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

That is exactly the question we have been addressing. Yes, that is a good question. The delivery of course in education establishment will be my remit because that is what education is about. In terms of which parts of the deliverable agenda are people responsible for, I would say this, I do not think

myself or the Minister for Children would want to pass anything on to anyone else and avoid accountability. It may well be that we take on too much accountability for some areas. The fine tuning of that accountability is less important than the fine tuning of delivery of the outcomes from this actionable agenda. I will say again, I started off by answering a question that, to be quite frank, was spoken about 4 years ago. This report was produced over a year ago. We need to get on with starting to deliver some of these deliverables from these reports rather than worrying about just who is accountable and what officer is doing it.

9.11 Deputy H.L. Jeune of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the price rises that had recently been announced by Island Energy. (OQ.23/2024)

Will the Minister advise whether he intends to ask Island Energy to explain their announcement of price increases of 12 per cent resulting in average households paying £13.80 more per month, at the same time as announcing that they will provide £11.56 compensation for customers affected by the gas outage that left some Islanders without hot water and cooking facilities for many weeks last year, and if not, why not?

Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John (The Minister for Infrastructure):

I thank the Deputy for her question. The immediate answer to the question is yes, I do intend to raise both of these issues with the gas company. When the announcement about the intended price increases was made, the gas company said it was due to several factors. These were listed as inflationary pressures on operating costs, high interest rates impacting on capital investment, and continued volatility in the wholesale markets. The Deputy will know that the Gas Law does not oblige the company to provide detailed financial information to Government other than what is included in its annual accounts. Nevertheless, we can and will ask for more detail and evidence of these factors as well as the basis for the compensation payments offered by the company. I recognise the absence of competition in the market and the absence of any direct price regulation, that it is important for Government to be assured that the energy market as a whole is acting in the best interests of Islanders. That is particularly important given the ongoing cost-of-living challenges Islanders face and their concerns about energy prices. In addressing this as part of my new portfolio, I intend to discuss the matter with the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development, who holds responsibility for the Competition Law. As the Deputy knows from her work in the previous Government, it is important to remain aligned in this matter, which covers a number of Ministerial portfolios.

9.11.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Would the Minister consider setting up a compensation scheme for gas customers affected by the outage in the same way they did during the COVID pandemic for compensation of lost wages?

The Connétable of St. John:

That is not something I have considered in the last week, but something I am willing to consider. There is absolutely no requirement currently for compensation to be offered in Jersey, and it is something I can take away and consider.

9.11.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

The Jersey Gas Law in Article 89 says that where it appears to the States to be necessary to do so in the public interest, the States may by regulations determine the tariffs to be made by the company in respect of gas, which it supplies. At what point does the Minister think that it might be considered in the public interest to suggest to set the maximum charges that the gas company can charge local people for their gas?

The Connétable of St. John:

I thank the Deputy for his question. As I said earlier, I need to find out far more detail than I have at present. What I have been able to glean is from the internet at the moment, and I will be looking for detailed information of that company's accounts. Clearly the company has to be able to invest in its infrastructure to be able to offer services going forward and clearly that has to be paid for. So I need far more detail before I can make a judgment.

9.11.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

Does the Minister agree that the principle of telling a business, especially when they have a monopoly, what they may charge is not necessarily that radical, and that we already do it with taxi drivers. We tell taxi drivers the maximum they can charge for their taxis, even though presumably they have to reinvest in their taxi businesses and renew their cars. So is it not also the case for critical infrastructure like Island Energy?

The Connétable of St. John:

I think when we look at energy, we do not just look at one type of energy. I believe that we have a responsibility right across the energy markets. We have shown restraint in terms of increasing taxes on fuel, for example, and I believe that we need to do the same with all of the energy and not just restricted to gas.

9.11.4 Deputy L. Stephenson:

The Minister in the answer to the first question referred to the market is working in the best interests of Islanders. What does the Minister consider to be the best interests of Islanders in this case?

The Connétable of St. John:

The best interests of Islanders is having a robust gas supply to those customers who use that service currently. I believe that the robust supply, consistent supply, has to be the highest priority in this case.

9.11.5 Deputy L. Stephenson:

In his discussions with the company going forward, how does he propose to try to move the matter forward if the company does not provide the kind of detailed information that he has referred to in his earlier answers as being required from his point of view?

The Connétable of St. John:

It is too early to say that. I have not met with the company. I have not met with the officers who are responsible for this area. But when I do meet with them, I am very familiar with company accounts and how to run a business, so I will be looking at how highly they are geared, for example, in terms of loans, there will be a lot of information that I will be looking at.

9.11.6 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I am pleased to hear that the Minister would consider a compensation scheme. When he is doing so, would he take into account the fact that many households with multiple children and multiple household members would have been even more adversely affected by this and tailor the offering accordingly?

[17:00]

The Connétable of St. John:

I hope the Deputy does not think that I am going to introduce a compensation scheme. I have committed to have a look at that, and that is very different to introducing a scheme. I will look at that in good faith. Island Energy recently published a 2023 review and part of that on page 9 was

their mantra: “Putting the customer at the heart of everything we do means that we hold ourselves to account to deliver results that meet or exceed our customer expectations.” I think the recent actions of that organisation fall far short of that ambition and I will be telling them that when I meet them.

9.11.7 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Given the recent occurrence, do you think regulation of Island Energy is appropriate and, if not, what needs to be changed?

The Connétable of St. John:

The Deputy is probably far more able to answer that question than I, having worked on energy for the last 18 months. It is something I need to find out more about before I commit.

9.12 Deputy J. Renouf of the Minister for Housing and Communities regarding regarding the redevelopment of the St. Saviour’s Hospital site. (OQ.17/2024)

Will the Minister explain what steps he will take, if any, to ensure that plans brought forward by Andium Homes for the redevelopment of the St. Saviour’s Hospital site will respect and protect the heritage value of the grade one listed building?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec (The Minister for Housing and Communities):

It is not impossible that the Deputy may know more about what has happened up until this point than I do myself now, as I have not had a direct update from Andium on it. But what I can tell the Deputy, I am a Minister who cares very much about Jersey’s architectural heritage. I respect the grade one listed status of the building and the lawn in front of it and I would not like to see anything done to jeopardise the heritage value of that site. In conversations that I have with Andium Homes, I will be making it clear that is an expectation that I have.

9.12.1 Deputy J. Renouf:

I am very pleased to hear that. I think the point I would make is that we have had recent excellent talks from the Association of Jersey Architects, which include presentations by Simon Allford, former president of R.I.B.A. (Royal Institute of British Architects), and Christophe Egret, both of who argued strongly for the retention and reuse of heritage buildings. Would he agree with me that when he talks to Andium Homes about the redevelopment of the site that that should be a priority, particularly avoiding what is referred to in recent supplementary planning guidance as façadism, i.e. just the preservation of a façade of the building rather than the building itself with its integrity in its setting.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I completely agree with that. To protect, enhance and get the best future use out of an old building like that, it does not necessarily mean protecting every single brick, but it does mean I think doing more than just a superficial element of it. We can see examples, not just in Jersey but around the world, of efforts that have been made to preserve the architectural heritage of buildings and even have them inspire nearby buildings as well. That helps add to the character of an area. Having such an old and fantastic building like the old St. Saviour’s Hospital there, that provides what I hope will be an opportunity to try to strike as best a balance as we possibly can in creating a new and vibrant community there. But in the context of something that is an important part of Jersey’s history that I will be making it clear I want as much done as possible to protect and preserve.

9.12.2 Deputy D.J. Warr:

I am conscious I have probably got a bit of an advantage on the Minister on this particular question in connection with St. Saviour’s Hospital. One of the aspects of this hospital is the issue around viability. I am very conscious that Andium have drawn up a scheme and are questioning the viability and how they can make the maths stack up. I understand that the Island Plan says it is an affordable

housing site. Would the Minister consider part affordable housing, part private, as a way of bringing this scheme forward?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

There are clauses in the planning rules that allow for viability tests and for the percentages that are otherwise dictated to be altered if it can be proven that is the only way of getting something to be achieved. I would not allow for a situation where large parts of that site were levelled to the ground to make things easier. If it requires us to look at things again and have a different approach and work with the new Minister for the Environment and new Minister for Infrastructure to get the right balance there, then that is something of course that I am prepared to do. But I do not believe in taking what in one sense would be the easy route out, which is to just say do whatever you like with the site. I think we have to be tougher than that.

9.12.3 Deputy L. Stephenson:

I was very pleased to hear the Minister refer to creating a vibrant community here because obviously his title does include “Communities” as well, and we know that good housing is not just about the 4 walls that a person lives in. With that in mind, what steps will he take to ensure that the redevelopment of this site includes quality amenity and community facilities, particularly those for play and sport and recreation, while of course respecting and protecting the heritage value of the listed building?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I think those are things that the supplementary planning guidance considered as well. You can add in transport links to that too so people can get around adequately. We know that is an area with a lot of pressure for school places too. So all of these things have to be considered. The supplementary planning guidance was put out for consultation. I do not think it is done yet, so I think we would have to look at that when that process is complete to make sure that it strikes the right balance. But I want that to be an extremely pleasant place for people to live, and that means having a good place for children to play, good space for families to get together and enjoy themselves, and so I want to see that included in whatever scheme we come up with. Just imagine what a beautiful setting it will be if we preserve that wonderful building there and have that adding to the character of that new neighbourhood.

9.12.4 Deputy L. Stephenson:

It is my understanding that I think the supplementary planning guidance certainly in relation to play is still outstanding. Will the Minister, with all of that in mind, take it upon himself to chase up where that guidance could be, because I think it would be hugely beneficial for those bringing forward such schemes to know.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

A very good point. If that is outstanding, then that should be chased up, but I do not think that should stop us in the meantime from saying, if you are going to have a housing development where inevitably lots of children are going to be living, we do not need to wait for that to know that it is the right thing to have decent facilities for those children to play and socialise with one another.

9.12.5 Deputy M. Tadier:

It is not just the fabric of the building of St. Saviour’s Hospital, which I think is important, but the history of it itself. It is one example where the Lieutenant Governor of the day rarely had to intervene with a States decision to exercise the power of veto because the States were extremely reluctant to spend money on a purpose-built asylum, and one has to wonder whether they were scared of the competition. But more importantly, does the Minister believe that there is a more fundamental way that we need to make sure we look after our public buildings and perhaps privately-owned ones, one

of which is to make sure that we fully account for the deterioration and depreciation of those buildings by putting adequate funding in place year on year and building up funds. Also making sure that the funds that were depleted to allow grants to be allocated for heritage buildings should be reinstated and restored.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I think I can answer that by saying most of the practical applications of what he has just suggested would fall outside of my remit; I think they would fall to other Ministers. But I agree with everything the Deputy just said.

9.12.6 Deputy M. Tadier:

I suppose the supplementary has to be that, in the spirit of collaborative working, would he make those views known to Ministers who do have that remit to all pull in the same direction to protect our important history and heritage?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, of course, and I think that the St. Saviour's Hospital site probably provides a good springboard for doing that.

9.12.7 Deputy P.M. Bailhache of St. Clement:

Given that St. Saviour's Hospital was originally part of the health estate, would the Minister consider working with the Minister for Health and Social Services to reserve part of the accommodation for nurses and other health workers so as to encourage the recruitment of these much needed workers?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Not necessarily. It is quite a bit out of the way and I know that there are plans for the health village just very nearby to where some of those health facilities currently are, so I would not rule it out on that basis that some workers would benefit from having close proximity to their place of work if they have key worker accommodation there. But with the wider health property portfolio, to be honest, that might not be the best site, and there will probably be other places that are closer that would be more convenient for them, especially if they are new to the Island and have not quite got to grips with how to get around yet.

9.12.8 Deputy J. Renouf:

It is encouraging to hear a Minister balancing these different priorities. Can I urge him to maintain his resolve if he comes under pressure to compromise on the heritage versus the housing supply/housing viability side of things, as these tensions are quite common in development issues and I think the heritage value of our key grade one listed buildings, which means that they are of international significance, should be very high up in our list of priorities.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I thank the Deputy for his encouragement on that and I hope that, as well as that encouragement, he will be able to provide his share of the political pressure as well, in case anything comes back that does not strike that right balance. But certainly while I am sat around the table, I will be making my views absolutely clear that the heritage value of the site and maintaining and preserving it is of paramount importance.

9.13 Deputy D.J. Warr of the Minister for Housing and Communities regarding the launch of the First Step first-time buyers' scheme. (OQ.15/2024)

I am conscious I am hopefully going to get a yes answer to this. Will the Minister commit to launching the Government's First Step first-time buyers home ownership shared equity scheme by the end of March 2024?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec (The Minister for Housing and Communities):

Yes.

9.13.1 Deputy D.J. Warr:

I have to say I am very pleased to hear that, so that is encouraging news. One of the asides or information in the background of that scheme, obviously it is targeted at medium to lower income families, and one of the issues which was raised to me was the issue around the 5 per cent deposit, which is being asked. Would the Minister consider removing the need to provide a deposit under the First Step scheme should this prove to be a barrier for uptake?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

We have the benefit of the plan for this to be to release funding in tranches for it. If it becomes apparent that there is not the uptake of it in the early stages of that, then it would be stupid not to review the parameters to make sure we encourage people to apply and benefit from it. So that is something to keep an eye on. But I would prefer to wait to see how those first tranches go and what the uptake is before deciding whether definitely to do that or not. But I think that is the point of doing it in tranches so that if anything does need to change based on uptake and how many people apply, we can try to be flexible.

9.13.2 Deputy L. Stephenson:

Does the Minister have any plans to review the eligibility criteria for this scheme and, by extension, the other schemes, because they all follow the same criteria, specifically the criteria which state that the size of the property that the person wishes to purchase should reflect the needs of the household at the time of the application.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Not in the short term because the scheme is not up and running yet. A selection of criteria for applying to it has been constructed already. I would prefer to see how that goes before changing it. The only potential exception to that is that, before we launch, I think we are due to get a new house price index published, which we just want to keep an eye on to make sure that the income thresholds are exactly right. I am not saying anything will necessarily change from there, but that is just one bit of information that will be published before we go live that we need to keep an eye on. But at this point I do not want to tinker with it drastically; I want to see how it goes.

9.13.3 Deputy L. Stephenson:

Does the Minister believe that this policy around the size of the household at the time of the application, and particularly given that it ties up all of the assisted purchase schemes under the same eligibility criteria, and, as I understand it, after the bridging Island Plan debate, ties up also now a percentage of Parish schemes as well, does he believe that it is an effective way of encouraging young Islanders to grow their families and to see a future in the Island or could it be improved to take a longer-term strategic view?

[17:15]

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Potentially, but, as I have said, we have come up with criteria for it and I want to see how that goes first. I am sure that there probably are improvements that can be made, but we are about to launch a scheme providing this kind of support in this shape for the first time and I would like to see what kind of uptake there is on it in the first instance. If it is not what we are anticipating or people are not coming forward to it, then that is the kind of thing I might seek to look at at that point. But I do not want to tinker with it too much now and would prefer to see how it goes.

9.13.4 Deputy D.J. Warr:

Again I am conscious that this is early days, but I am going back to my day as the Minister for Housing and Communities where the then Deputy challenged me about a funding mechanism for the First Step scheme, which he suggested should be a stamp duty. I notice that in the press reports he talked about, if the scheme was successful, he would look to get further funding, but that funding would come from a new Government Plan. In his efforts to get things moving faster, would he consider alternative funding plans instead of waiting until the next Government Plan?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, I would, but that would require consultation with the rest of the Council of Ministers to identify that. But I will be banging the drum for that. I think the makeup of this scheme is good; it is a really good starting point. I want to see it benefit as many people as possible and that, I believe, will require more funding for it. If I can do that sooner rather than later, that is what I will do, but I would have to speak with other political colleagues to secure their approval for that as well.

9.14 Deputy M.B. Andrews of the Chief Minister regarding an analysis of the respective costs of the previous Our Hospital project in comparison with those of the plans for new multi-site healthcare facilities. (OQ.13/2024)

Will the Chief Minister advise whether he will now be abandoning calls for an analysis of the costs associated with the Overdale Hospital site versus the new multi-site healthcare facilities, despite expressing his concerns regarding the cost of the multi-site healthcare facilities since his re-election in 2022?

Deputy L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister):

I currently have no plans to seek further clarification. Having spoken with Deputy Binet about the situation, given that he has been at the forefront of the project for the last 18 months, I am fully aware of the implications and challenges that are ahead in preparing this work in detail. Deputy Binet has, I believe, assured this Assembly that he will proceed with full transparency on costings and detail. That is going to be important to win over the Assembly. So, on balance, with all of the information available, I have concluded that the best chance we have of proceeding with the new hospital and therefore in the best interest of Islanders is to continue with Deputy Binet leading the multi-site scheme.

9.14.1 Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Can the Chief Minister confirm whether he is of the belief that the Minister for Health and Social Services would have supported his candidacy for Chief Minister had the Chief Minister maintained his stance and support of the Overdale Hospital site?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

I believe he would, but you will have to ask him that, because the vote of no confidence was brought on a completely different issue, a far more important issue in relation to the way the Island was being governed, not over previous plans for a hospital.

9.15 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of the Minister for Children and Education regarding same-sex parental rights legislation. (OQ.21/2024)

Will the Minister please advise what plans he has for progressing the same-sex parental rights legislation, which will update the Children (Jersey) Law 2002, the Marriage and Civil Status (Jersey) Law 2001 and associated consequential amendments, and what priority he will be giving this work?

The Connétable of St. Peter (The Minister for Children and Education):

P.104/2023, the Draft Children and Civil Status (Amendments) (Jersey) Law was lodged by my predecessor and is currently being reviewed by the Children, Education, Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. To allow enough time for the review to be completed, the debate has been listed for the sitting starting on 19th March, and, certainly from my point of view, there is no reason to change that date. So depending on the outcome and the timeline of the panel's review, I fully intend to prioritise this work and proceed with the debate on that date. If at all possible, I want to avoid any further delays for the families who are keenly and patiently waiting for this important legislation to be debated.

9.15.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Will the Minister ensure that there is sufficient officer resource to make sure that the consequential amendments are completed and before the Assembly well before the end of this year, please?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Yes, as I have said, I do not wish there to be any delays. I fully support this legislation and I will continue to prioritise the creation of the legislation to the same extent as my predecessor and ensure that it has the appropriate level of support.

The Deputy Bailiff:

That brings the period of questions to an end. The next matter on the agenda is Questions to Ministers without notice. The first period of questions are questions for the Minister for Health and Social Services.

10. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Minister for Health and Social Services

10.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

We would not want to disappoint him on his first day in the job. So I think it was touched on by the Constable of St. Mary and I had cause at lunchtime to speak to a lady about private healthcare. I will not go into too much detail, but she said that if it was not for the fact that she did not have private healthcare, she probably would not be alive because an illness she had was only picked up because of that. Does the Minister believe that there is a divide in accessing suitable healthcare depending on whether you can afford private healthcare or not in the Island and what does he think is the solution if that is the case?

Deputy T. Binet (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

Firstly, I would like to thank the Deputy for being so considerate. I really was not looking forward to the prospect of not having any questions, so he has at least helped me on that front. Private healthcare, I accept the Deputy's contention that there is a difference in terms of the availability of healthcare depending on whether you have private health insurance or not. I think the answer to that is simply to improve the quality of the healthcare provision that we have in terms of making it better and reducing waiting lists so that we get as much parity as we possibly can.

10.1.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

It is related. What does the Minister think is the correct and acceptable split for the amount of work that consultants do privately and what they do for the wider public?

Deputy T. Binet:

Forgive me, but I think that is too complicated a question for me to answer it at this stage. I do not think I can add much to that.

10.2 Deputy L. Stephenson:

The Minister's declaration of interest states that he is a trustee of the charity Focus on Mental Illness. Given that he now controls the budget for mental health, does he consider this to be a conflict of interest and how will he be dealing with that conflict

Deputy T. Binet:

That is certainly correct, I do deem that to be a conflict of interest. I have every intention of stepping down very soon and just going through the process of trying to find a suitable alternative chair.

10.2.1 Deputy L. Stephenson:

What will his ongoing relationship with the charity be and will he continue to attend meetings or be involved in the decision-making process in any way?

Deputy T. Binet:

That is yet to be defined. I obviously had a very close interest in mental health care and mental health problems over a long period of time. I have to maintain a certain association because quite a lot of the funding comes from Deputy Binet and myself, so in that respect, we have to remain connected to the charity. But in terms of the operations, I think it would be improper for either of us to have any direct impact on that.

10.3 Connétable P.B. Le Sueur of Trinity:

Although Members have received an interesting update from the Minister for Infrastructure this morning about the relocation of Samarès Ward to St. Ewolds, I would still like to ask a question to the Minister, is the Minister able to outline in broad terms his anticipated programme for the first phase of the hospital project, i.e. when does he expect to submit the first planning application and when we can expect to see a contractor appointed and a spade in the ground?

Deputy T. Binet:

I will do my best to run through it in sequence. There has been a little bit of a gap in the last month in terms of catching up on the detailed plans. They are ready to be released just about; I think we need to probably take another week or 10 days to sanction those for release and they are just outline plans to give people a chance to have a vision of what it is likely to look like, the acute section. I am still hoping to produce a business case before the summer recess and hopefully, on or about that time, produce a set of plans ready to submit. The hope is that we will be about another 6 months or thereabouts in getting the permissions through, if all goes well, and contracts running into next year and hopefully construction underway sometime during the course of 2025. I do not think I can be a great deal more specific than that at this stage.

10.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Last week, in question time, the Minister had the positive response to whether he was going to continue to progress the Health Access Scheme, ensuring affordable access to primary healthcare on the Island, but baulked and said no when asked if he would expand the scheme. He said: "I do not have sufficient information." Has he got any more information this week?

Deputy T. Binet:

Embarrassingly, the answer to that is no, I am afraid I do not. I have had a very limited amount of time and I am afraid that has not managed to be one of my priorities at this stage, but it is definitely something that is on my agenda.

10.4.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Would it assist the Minister if I were to inform him that I believe a review of the impact of the health scheme has been done and awaits his perusal, I believe. Is that the case?

Deputy T. Binet:

I have to confess I was not aware of that, but if it is available, I am sure it will be put in front of me very soon, and if the Deputy is able to fast track that for me or to point me in the right direction, I would be quite happy with that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

My question has already been asked.

10.5 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Is the Minister aware of the Jersey health profile, which was published earlier this year and, if not, would he commit to examining that report and give particular attention to the health inequalities outlined within that report?

Deputy T. Binet:

Yes, I think it would be rather daft of me not to accept that I am happy to do that. As to when I can prioritise that, I cannot commit, but I certainly will have a look at that as soon as time allows.

10.5.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Would the Minister seek to receive a briefing from his officers on the health inequalities outlined in the report so that he can work towards some solutions for families that are living in relative low income and have corresponding poor health outcomes because of their low income?

Deputy T. Binet:

I do not have any problem with that at all.

10.6 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Will the Minister confirm his commitment to the dementia strategy and confirm that he is minded to still have a timely public launch to ensure no further delay and, if not, why not?

Deputy T. Binet:

Once again, that seems very remarkably sensible, so the answer to that is yes.

10.6.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Minister for his brief answer and will the Minister confirm that he is committed to implementing the priorities outlined in the strategy and the resources required to implement key actions, and, if not, why not?

Deputy T. Binet:

I am sure the Deputy will appreciate that I have not had a chance to look at that in detail, but I am sure that if it makes sense, and I am sure it does, then I would be very happy to make sure that we move with all speed.

10.7 Deputy J. Renouf:

Returning to the question raised by Deputy Stephenson, has the Minister taken advice from the Charity Commissioner or from officers about the potential conflict here because simply removing himself from the board, it seems to me that if he is still a major donor of a charity and remains in control of the budgets that might be attributed in this area, then this might represent a conflict and so would he give further consideration to whether he needs to address this from the other side of the equation and particularly his role as Minister for Health and Social Services in giving money to that charity?

[17:30]

Deputy T. Binet:

I am not quite sure what the Deputy means by being in control of the budgets. Donating to a charity is a private matter and I do not think that conflicts with anything. By donating to the charity, it does not mean that I am in charge of how the money gets spent if there is a different board of trustees, so I really do not think that is an issue. But I am quite familiar with the conflicts of interest involved, and I think the charity is in its fourth year and I have had various dealings with the commissioner over the course of time on conflicts of interest and I intend to be in touch with him on this to make sure that my conduct is appropriate.

10.7.1 Deputy J. Renouf:

The point I was trying to make was that he is in charge of health policy, he will be in charge of monies that might be allocated or in policies that might apply to that charity, and that he might remain as a significant figure in that charity and the relevant section I believe in the Charity Commission Law says that anything in terms of any interests that they might hold, it is not just about a position on a board.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Do you have a question there?

Deputy T. Binet:

It may help the Deputy to know that we have not had a single penny from the States to date and I genuinely do not think there is an issue here at this point in time.

10.8 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Could I ask the Minister whether there has been any progress on the appointment of the chair of the Health Board?

Deputy T. Binet:

Yes, to the best of my knowledge there are now 2 candidates and I am due to meet them during the course of next week.

10.8.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Can I ask when we expect to see those candidates or would you prefer when the candidate takes a post?

Deputy T. Binet:

As soon as possible, I would hope within the space of the next couple of weeks.

10.9 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

While considerable improvement has been made to waiting times for children to have assessments for A.D.H.D. (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and autism, could the Minister elaborate whether he is minded to look into this area for adults and look at the waiting times for those assessments?

Deputy T. Binet:

There seems to be an awful lot of very specific questions, and if I could advise Members that if they have specifics, it is difficult for me to make a whole series of commitments at this point in time and I would be very happy to receive any particular concerns that people have by email so that they can be put into the pot and prioritised appropriately.

10.9.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

In the first instance, would the Minister seek to receive a briefing from his officers on this issue?

Deputy T. Binet:

Certainly.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Are there any additional questions for this Minister?

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

I would like to propose the adjournment.

The Deputy Bailiff:

We should be clear that if there are no further questions for this Minister and we will be moving on to the next one tomorrow? Yes, so that concludes the questions for this Minister, and the adjournment has been ...

Deputy M. Tadier:

Before you adjourn, can I just ask for direction as to proceedings tomorrow after questions, whether if panels wish to constitute their membership tomorrow, whether that is in order. I am not saying we necessarily would be in a position to do that, but if it were the case.

The Deputy Bailiff:

We were expecting it to occur at the next meeting, but you are right in saying it could occur at this meeting, but we are expecting at the next meeting.

Deputy M. Tadier:

It may be helpful to, if there are panels which could be constituted, even if not in their entirety, straight away, because a 3-week period is 3 weeks wasted potentially that Scrutiny could be doing work constructively. I would suggest that if there are Members who would like to join panels that they make themselves known, or for the chairs to extend that invitation, and that could be done this evening via the usual channels.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Certainly, Deputy, we can accommodate that and that will occur if the panels are ready to be constituted wholly or in part. The adjournment was proposed, are Members content to adjourn now? The Assembly is adjourned until 9.30 a.m. tomorrow morning.

ADJOURNMENT

[17:35]