

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY THE CONNETABLE OF ST. BRELADE
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 11th APRIL 2022
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON WEDNESDAY 20th APRIL 2022**

Question

“In light of comments from the Governor of the Bank of England that recent global developments could have a bigger impact than the 2008 global economic shock, and given the geopolitical and economic impacts on Jersey as a result, will the Chief Minister consider setting up an apolitical, top-level, expert working group to advise the incoming Government on options for enhancing Jersey’s resilience and sustainability, including (but not limited to) a greater dependence upon Island resources / Jersey waters for agriculture and fisheries; and if not, why not?”

Answer

We fully support the provision of apolitical, expert advice for consideration by Ministers in complex policy areas. With respect to fisheries, Ministers benefit from the input from both the Marine Resources Panel, advising the Minister for the Environment, and the newly formed Marine Economy Advisory Group, advising the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture. We are well served in this area. Nevertheless, we would fully support co-opting additional individuals to either of the bodies on a permanent or ad hoc basis as and when required to deal with a particular scenario should there be a perceived gap in knowledge or expertise. There is of course an opportunity for some development of the local market for local fisheries products (insofar as this will increase resilience) and the bodies above are well placed to advise on that. However, we must acknowledge the scale of our industry, the economics and the range and availability of products in making that assessment. The Department for the Economy (Rural and Marine sector) aims to secure Jersey’s ability to produce food - and this is achieved by a range of policies including direct and indirect support to the agri-food sector so as to ensure economic sustainability; along with land and resource management policies to ensure environmental sustainability. As with fisheries, there is some opportunity to develop the local market for local products, but here again we are constrained by economies of scale and the range and availability of products. We are also in the process of establishing a new Rural Forum, with independent stakeholders, to advise on this and other issues. Please also refer to WQ.119/2022