



Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Quarterly Public Hearing

Witness: The Minister for External Relations and Services

Friday, 18th February 2022

Panel:

Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary (Chair)

Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin

Senator S.W. Pallett

Witnesses:

Senator I.J. Gorst, The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services

Connétable R.A. Buchanan of St. Ouen, Assistant Minister for External Relations and Financial Services

Ms. K. Nutt, Group Director, External Relations

Mr. G. Pearmain, Director of Financial Crime Strategy

Mr. J. Silverston, Director of Financial Services

Mr. D. Marcos, Head of International Compliance

[12:34]

Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary (Chair):

Good afternoon and welcome, everyone, to this meeting of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel for the public hearing with the Minister and officers. As usual, I will begin by introducing the panel which consists of myself, David Johnson, Deputy of St. Mary, Chair ...

Deputy S. W. Luce of St. Martin:

Deputy Steve Luce.

Senator S. W. Pallett:

Senator Steve Pallet.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Minister, would you like to introduce your team?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes. Ian Gorst, Minister.

Assistant Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Richard Buchanan, Assistant Minister.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I am joined in person by ...

Group Director, External Relations:

Kate Nutt, Group Director, External Relations.

Director of Financial Crime Strategy:

George Pearmain, Director of Financial Crime Strategy.

Director of Financial Services:

James Silverston, Director of Financial Services.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you, everyone, and thank you for coming in. As you are aware, this is the last of our public hearings in this session, so to an extent the questions may be familiar to you because we wish to leave this session with a straight line under our mandate, as it were, so bear with us, please, Minister. We will begin with a general question on MONEYVAL, which has been a feature of this regime, if I can call it that. At the last quarterly hearing we were advised that the majority of the legislation is preparing us for the MONEYVAL inspection and that really was time critical. Could you advise, is there much more in the pipeline that we do not yet know about?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Thank you, Chair, and maybe I will say something at the end but I am extremely grateful for all of the work the panel has done over the last 4 years. I really have found it to be a very helpful and constructive relationship where you have added great value to the work of the department and

challenge. I am extremely grateful for that. As you know, we have prioritised during the last couple of years being appropriately prepared for the MONEYVAL on-Island assessment, which will be in 2023, and we have had during that process quite a lot of legislative changes required. Some of them are new provisions and some of them are just for clarification. So you will be aware of all the items that are lodged and there are one or 2 other items not yet lodged, so we have got the exemptions regulations that have now just been lodged. We have got changes to the Financial Intelligence Unit. They have just been lodged. We have got changes to the not-for-profit organisations law dealing with ensuring that there are appropriate supervision of A.M.L. (anti -money laundering) and C.F.T. (countering funding of terrorism) requirements. They are very shortly to be lodged and then we have got a number of amendments around failure to prevent provisions. They are very shortly to be lodged, so we expect those to be lodged in advance and hopefully that will allow you to do your scrutiny work on those that have not yet been lodged and get them agreed in the States Assembly prior to the election. There are some areas, particularly with the provisions around deferred prosecutions, which are not yet lodged and will not be lodged this side of the election or it is very unlikely that they will be lodged. Then I think - James, if you will just remind me - there are a couple of items as well from Financial Services which are not yet lodged.

Director of Financial Services:

Lodged items, you have the limited liability company regulations and you have the banking business amendment. Still to be lodged is the limited partnership reforms and that we intend to make on 25th April.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you for the kind words earlier and thank you for keeping us up to speed on what we are about to receive, as it were. In fact you have answered most of the questions. You will have completed, by the end of this term, your programme for getting through, assuming they do get through, all you needed or are there some legacy documents you would prefer to have got through?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I think the only one that we might have got through was the deferred prosecutions legislation, but there is further work requiring more consultation and so with the best will in the world that is not going to be got through, I do not think, prior to the election. As I say, the failure to prevent legislation is due to close to consultation next week and providing that that consultation does not throw up any googlies, as it were, then that will be lodged and hopefully debated as well. So I cannot say with certainty that it will be brought forward but I would really like it to be brought forward if we can manage it, but it very much depends on the results of the consultation with the industry and then of course it will be relying on your scrutinising it as well.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

To date most of the legislation has got through without too much opposition in the Assembly (audio cuts out) review a lot of this in depth, so is there much you think might be contentious, might hold things up?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I hope not. I think the recently lodged legislation, particularly with exemptions that were previously available to certain sectors of industry around requirements from A.M.L. and C.F.T., those exemptions were well used, but I think it is well understood that under the current requirements exemptions cannot be as broad as they previously were and where exemptions are appropriate you have to have understood the risks and why there might still be exemptions. There are some areas around connected parties which we will go away and do further consultation on, so that might have been difficult, but I think the way that we are dealing with it and the working parties that we have had involved in it means that it should be more straightforward. The F.I.U. (Financial Intelligence Unit) and the redesign of that again is very much following best practice. It will be an independent F.I.U. but will sit in the police service so I think the technical term that George would use is a hybrid approach. That, it is fair to say, has taken a number of conversations to get alignment across the agencies but there is now very great alignment and strong support for that. We spent a meeting earlier this week discussing how we are going to ensure that we recruit the right calibre of director to lead that, because that will be fundamental to how we are dealing with intelligence into the future and will mean that we meet the international standard. So I do not expect that to be controversial in the way you might have thought it would have been previously. Then we have got, which is not yet lodged, the failure to prevent, which is limited to failure to prevent A.M.L. and C.F.T. from happening within the premises. I think the way that that has been narrowly drafted means that it has been reasonably well received. As I say, it will depend what the consultation comes back with but certainly the working group of the agencies that were involved in it and the pre-consultation consultation - because we do that as well - in that regard was reasonably well received, so I do not perceive either at this stage that that will be difficult.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Minister, you mentioned a hybrid F.I.U. Does that mean we are proposing to do things differently than they are currently done in other jurisdictions?

[12:45]

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

No, there were a number of models of F.I.U. One is you could go fully independent and we did not think that was appropriate for all sorts of reasons. The F.I.U. remaining to sit in the States of Jersey

Police building gives enhanced confidence around the security of the data and the information that is provided. It will have an independent board overseeing its work and that is a model which has been moved to in the Isle of Man, in Guernsey and there are 2 other jurisdictions that would be comparable to us. George, you are going to just remind me which they are.

Director of Financial Crime Strategy:

I think Gibraltar as well.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Okay. We will just stick with Gibraltar. So it is not uncommon for small centres like ours to have that hybrid approach.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Are independent auditors left to domestic viability?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

George, you can go into further detail. It will sit under the auspices of the Minister for Home Affairs for all of the reasons that you can imagine but, George, if you just want to give us a bit more.

Director of Financial Crime Strategy:

A board will be appointed of at least 5 members. It will be appointed through the relevant competent authorities, so the police, the Law Officers' Department, the J.F.S.C. (Jersey Financial Services Commission) and at least 2 government departments, Home Affairs and the Department for the Economy, representing the range of stakeholders who have an interest in the F.I.U. I should be clear that the audit board will have a strategic direction only. It does not provide any operational views. The operational independence rests with the director of the F.I.U. The draft also contains a number of provisions as to the budget of the F.I.U. and annual reporting that comes back, which will then be published by the Minister onwards to the States Assembly in terms of the transparency route for the F.I.U. This is very much the right group to go down the middle ground before completely independent or, as the Minister mentioned, the Isle of Man who have gone pretty quickly to an independent unit and that has caused a number of teething problems. Keeping the unit inside the police with a ministerial level of responsibility allows the portfolio to be subject to public governance by the normal police mechanisms. The importance of this overall though is to support the investment that the States Assembly provided in the Government Plan in December of last year, which will increase the staffing of the F.I.U. by over 120 per cent, taking it to hopefully staffing of around 30 people, which will be probably at a level of appropriate staffing for the risks that we see at the moment and the structure and the governance is making sure that that resource is appropriate.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Looking back as we do over the period that has involved COVID, that has had its effect. I take it from what we have seen before this panel that has not slowed down the progress on MONEYVAL matters presumably because you have given that priority. Is that fair comment?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I think in the early days of COVID certainly George and his team helped support and were - as well as from James's team in Financial Services - instrumental in setting up the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme. Without them it would not have happened, so it is fair to say that they were taken from their day work to support the interventions in the economy and that was right for them to do that at that point in time. So we could say that 2 years ago perhaps we could have made a bit more progress in those early months of COVID, but as far as I am concerned oddly the timeline of the election has focused our attention on the mock review and focused our attention on getting things done in advance because we have those months when either we will be in purdah or will be forming a new government and it will be difficult to get things through. I think that has meant that probably that timeline push has counterbalanced the couple of months where officials were dealing with COVID-related economic intervention. So at the end of the 2 years I do not feel it has been a drag on what we have needed to do.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Has there been much in the way of financial legislation that has been delayed?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Not yet. My officers are always telling me: "Minister, you have got to balance the resource with the legislation." I think it is fair to say the delays that we have had even on the L.L.C.s (limited liability companies) were really technical delays in trying to solve technical problems that arose rather than COVID-related delays.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I think I have exhausted my questions on the MONEYVAL situation.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Minister, the last time we met you mentioned that a short-term business plan was something you would take away and deliver. Did that happen?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Well, what actually happened really in ... I think you are referring to the fact that the States agreed that there would be a separate heads of expenditure and we go away and create a separate External

Relations Department. In relation to the business plan as it stands, it is just in the Chief Executive's office and if you look at the business plan, which it is fair to say is fairly reasonably high level, it is all in there. What we will need to do when the new department is fully formed, which we now expect to be early May, is that we will take out that O.C.E.(Office of the Chief Executive) bit of the business plan and create our own standalone one, which will just sit alongside it really.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Is there anything else that you want to tell us about the business plan running up to the election?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

No, I do not think there is anything that has not been before the Assembly in the Government Plan. As you know, there was extra ... we have been supporting J.F.L. (Jersey Finance Limited) with extra promotional individuals, both in London but also out in Singapore. They are in the process of recruiting for that but that was all, I think, fully envisaged in the Government Plan. I do not think there is anything in addition.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

This is a difficult question to answer because you do not know what is coming, but has anything turned up unexpectedly in the last couple of months or that you envisage? Can you see work coming down the line that is going to need resources before the election, any additional work that you would have to factor for?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I do not think there is anything come up that we had not envisaged. The nature of our work is really that things bubble up from time to time and we solve the problem along the way and then it settles down and goes along in business. We know obviously take the fishing issue that bubbles up from time to time, things around financial services, commitments around beneficial ownership and how we are going to manage those. That will come to the fore again because the E.U. (European Union) have not yet published their implementation review around public registers there and we are going to need to make sure there is alignment with the Isle of Man and Guernsey again on those particular issues. So these things that we know about we make a commitment and then there is a piece of work that is ongoing and then it bubbles up and we have to intervene a bit, but there is nothing ... you know what is going to happen, I will leave this door and somebody will send me an email about something else that crops up that we need to deal with, but there is nothing that I can think of right now.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

You are our Minister for External Relations and obviously in the last couple of months the situation in Europe has deteriorated. Is there anything that you would wish to tell us about that, finding work that you need to do? Is there anything that affects the Island directly from that?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Only to ensure that we are ready to implement any relevant sanctions that either the U.K. (United Kingdom) or the U.N. (United Nations) might issue in relation to potential Russian aggression. We have seen the changes to a statutory instrument in the United Kingdom. We do not, at this point, need to change anything because we already have a very flexible piece of legislation that would allow me to make an order to implement any relevant sanctions. Officials have been liaising with the Foreign Office to ensure that we are ready straightaway to implement those sanctions but that has very much been at official level.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Is that the only sanction that might see an increase in workload because of the Ukraine situation? There is no diplomatic work to be done? We do not have responsibility for defence or anything like that, so we do not get involved at all?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

No, we do not.

Assistant Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Can I just quickly interject back to the Ukraine situation? Clearly there will be implications for the Island if we do end up with a more serious situation in the Ukraine because it will impact world markets and any negative impact on world markets of course affects our tax base indirectly. Businesses that have or manage investments will see their revenue streams drop and, of course, it affects us because a lot of our assets are invested in markets in pensions and things like that. So there are some more subtle effects that a more serious situation could have on the Island and, of course, we are alive to those and our financial services companies to make sure they are coping with them.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

In similar vein, of course, but it is not necessarily directly related with this issue but it is related with all sorts of potential world events, you have got the supply chain work to make sure that the supply chain is robust and really building on the work that we did arriving at Brexit, which we have used again for COVID and we liaise with the U.K. and the relevant bodies there as well. But again that is ongoing work. When there are international situations that might affect the supply chain, those conversations are renewed and refreshed.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Minister, I will come back to the supply chain.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Do you have a dialogue with MONEYVAL when they do the inspection and, if so, how does that work?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

The answer is a straightforward yes. We, in Jersey, have a number of individuals who undertake reviews and inspections for MONEYVAL onsite visits. Of course we are very pleased that George returned to Jersey to help us with our inspection and prepare us. He, of course, has got first-hand experience of being at MONEYVAL and working with and for MONEYVAL. George, I do not know if you want to talk a little bit ... if the panel has got time and would like to hear briefly.

Director of Financial Crime Strategy:

I will be very brief. I need to briefly correct the Minister that I worked for F.A.T.F. (Financial Action Task Force). It is an overarching body, so it is fairly similar and linked to MONEYVAL. Firstly I think I should say that MONEYVAL is a technical body of experts and therefore the conversations are at the level of experts and officials in broadly government departments, regulators, police or prosecutors. The conversation is very much at a technical level. There have been political engagements over the years. We have not had one over the recent years whilst the current Minister has been in post, mainly due to the COVID period. We speak with the secretariat regularly and take part in evaluations so we know how the evaluations will work. I am currently taking part in the evaluation of Bulgaria, so I am seeing how a current recent evaluation is going. Other colleagues are taking part in an evaluation of Lichtenstein. So we do have an ongoing idea. We know what the assessments will be like and we understand what is expected of jurisdictions, it is very much an understanding process. It is also a community where we share best practice and understanding around the standards. For those who may be concerned about the fact that this is a European body where we do not know what is going on, we do. We attend there, we discuss the position including how the standards apply to ensure that we obtain as much equal application of the standards as possible.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Moving on to free trade agreements, on 17th December 2021 there was a notice on the Government website that Jersey has been but not quite included in the U.K.'s new trade deal with Australia and was included within the trade deal for goods-related chapters from day one. The panel noticed that this would provide more opportunities for our local economy to access new markets and increase

our presence and visibility on the international stage. I wonder if I could ask the Minister, do you accept that our local economy cannot really operate in Australian markets?

[13:00]

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

That I do not know. You need to ask the Minister for Economic Development or department. What we have sought to do in External Relations is ensure that we have got this optionality to be in on the principles which are beneficial to Jersey. Those principles were obviously approved by the Assembly recently. It is fair to say there is probably more opportunity in the services sector but because that is new and we need to do more review work on exactly what the implications are, we agreed that with the U.K. and we have made the decision for ourselves that it was in our interests to be included at day one for goods. We are used to being included in the E.U. for goods and, therefore, that is reasonably straightforward but recognising that there are very few Jersey producers that would be sending goods all the way to Australia and likewise with New Zealand. But what that does mean is that we can negotiate with them the possibility of extending the services chapters in due course when we have done the review work on potential benefits and pitfalls there and that that will be easier to do than trying to seek an extension for the entire agreement at a future date.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Is there any timeline for services?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

We do not have a timeline. That certainly will not be happening before the election. We have got commitments certainly with Australia and the U.K. that it will be done - I think the wording is - as soon as possible or something like that. We have more work to do here around service inclusion and some of that work is reasonably difficult because it is to do with trademarks and I.P. (intellectual property).

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Have you or any representative bodies started to consider what (audio cuts out)

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

We are doing it really in External Relations from a trade negotiation point of view, thinking about what you would ... if there need to be any legislative changes from that, but there are working groups across government working with Economic Development who themselves work across industry to see what opportunities might be available. There is an alternative school of thought as well, which is that really our financial services trade freely around the world right now. What we do need to be

mindful of though, however, is that the U.K.'s relationship is going to be changing in relation to how it trades with countries that it has got a trade agreement with and, therefore, we do not want the potential to be in a less advantageous position than we currently are, and that is why we have got to take this piece of work seriously.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Do you mind if I just ask a question about that? Minister, if you use a S.W.O.T. (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis, then the opportunities on the one hand may be threats on the other. Are you aware that there might be a threat, for example, to certain dairy products, producing Jersey milk, by the exports from Australia and New Zealand dairy products to us?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

There are not, because we have dealt with that under a separate process. The dairy products issue is one that we recognise the great importance of and we dealt with that in regard to the U.K. and in regard to the customs arrangements and so that gives us safeguards from dairy products right across the board.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Across the whole board of dairy products?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Not just fresh milk?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

No, it is only fresh milk but the agreement that we have got with the U.K. protects the fresh milk arrangement, whatever is negotiated in free trade deals elsewhere.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

With the U.K. in terms of free trade deal with Australia, presumably they have to make those pertaining to the U.K.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

They go through a process of compliance and making sure that they could comply with what is being negotiated. With a brand new free trade agreement, which is what the Australian one really was,

you would ... I think it is more about what is in their interest, so you would expect little legislative change to be needed. When you are looking at something like the C.P.T.P.P. (Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership), which is an existing trade agreement that the U.K. is seeking to become a party to, then the compliance work and legislative change work is greater. That is why our position on C.P.T.P.P. is slightly more reserved and nuanced. We would like to be in for goods but we are reserving our position because that is dependent on what the compliance matrix really looks like and ensuring it is in our interest so you do not have to incorporate a great deal of bureaucracy in order to comply, because that might tip it back to the Deputy of St. Martin's point about a S.W.O.T. analysis. I mean it is just not in your interest.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

So the U.K. negotiate for us but we do not have (audio cuts out)

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

That is correct, yes.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Are there any additional upcoming free trade agreements that you expect Jersey will participate in?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

The New Zealand agreement is very close; I am going to say that.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

How long does it usually take for the U.K. to negotiate a free trade agreement? Do you have any idea?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

It takes longer than you might think. So the Australian agreement took longer than was initially envisaged and the New Zealand agreement likewise. It had initially been thought that it would have been completed a few months ago. That is not the case but it is now, we expect, very near indeed. There are others. Kate just reminds me of others that are in the pipeline: Canada, Mexico and the G.C.C. (Gulf Co-operation Council) as well. Again, they will take time.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

It is not something that is being rushed because of Brexit particularly?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Of course Brexit is the trigger that allows the U.K. to negotiate its individual trade deals but it is also an incentive to get them completed reasonably quickly. I do think that they are meeting a tighter timescale than would be traditional when negotiating free trade deals. But of course these things are not easy because both parties are negotiating in their interest and want to benefit their economy, producers and service industries and have greater access to the market in the other country in their own interest.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Have you consulted on the potential free trade agreements that might be coming and ask whether ...

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes, so I mean we have also got Greenland, we have Israel, like I said, we have the C.P.T.P.P. - I have to close my eyes to remember that - we have had the Singapore digital agreement and then we have got India as well where they are just looking to start that process as well. We do engage. Kate is just reminding me that last week I met with Penny Mordaunt, the Minister in the Department for International Trade, and we talked about the ongoing work there and our ongoing engagement and of course the ongoing work that she is doing in relation to U.S. (United States) agreements; not just federal but state-wide as well.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

On that basis, you do get to put to the Minister.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I am aware she may not effect for another pre-COVID.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes. But it is fair to say that we are very much aligned with where the U.K. is focusing.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

You mentioned Brexit - leaving fishing to one side for the moment - is there anything from the Brexit point of view that the panel might be interested in? (audio cuts out)

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

That is a good question. We continue to engage in Brussels and we have just ... I think there is a Brussels trip currently in the diary for pre-election, so we hope that that will happen. Officials continue to engage with the E.U. delegation in London. I have met the E.U. ambassador to London on a couple of occasions. So that engagement piece that we knew would be a result of Brexit is something that we are working on and doing. We will need to, and I do not want to step into the fishing thing because I know you have questions on that, we also have a programme of enhanced engagement with France, which will ... some of that will start before the election but that will really be post the election. That is not to say that officials are not continuing that work during the election period because they very much are.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Is there any pressure from the E.U. around (audio cuts out)

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes, a lot of day-to-day engagement is around the financial services and agenda around co-operation. Think about the O.E.C.D. (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) work, the E.U. issue, the directive late in December about how they would expect member states to implement those 2 particular pillars of O.E.C.D. work. We expect that in due course a similar approach will potentially be rolled out and requested of third countries. We know that the forum for - again there are so many initials are there not - harmful tax practices are starting to think and work with the E.U. and looking at some of the E.U. methodologies to think about whether there are changes around their particular regime that need to be implemented in light of the Paradise Papers again. That is always day-to-day stuff that just keeps going that we are engaging with.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Picking up, Minister, on your reference just now to the O.E.C.D. Pillar One and Pillar Two taxation rules. At the last quarterly hearing in December you advised that Jersey's implementation of those rules would be: "Extremely tight, particularly for us in Jersey, where we have an election." Can you please advise what preparations are being made to ensure that we do meet our Pillar One and Pillar Two tax obligations while elections are underway?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes, so you are right to recall that. There is a tight timeline that is envisaged. I have just talked about the E.U. directive about implementation. The U.K. has published its Pillar Two consultation document. They are aiming to implement their tax year in 2023, which of course initially everyone was working towards the beginning of 2023, so there is a slight slippage there. The Swiss have announced that they will implement any changes from the start of 2024 so there is, I think, perhaps a bit more flexibility around implementation than we had initially envisaged. We, of course, know

that the U.S. have struggled to get the Build Back Better Bill through its parliamentary process to which items were required in order for them to be compliant and implement the Pillar One approach.

[13:15]

That is taking more time even than was envisaged when we were in Washington in early December. But we still do need to recognise that there will be a lot of work in giving effect to our commitments. Pillar One is a minimum standard, so we will be implementing that. Pillar Two, there are more policy questions and decisions still to be made. They will need to be made post the election. What we are proposing to do in advance of the election is issue something that we have called a reflective paper, which will show that we have been engaged, that we are considering the issues and outlining some of the policy decisions which will need to be made post the election. Because the incoming Government will then need to make those decisions and give effect to legislative changes, even though I think certainly in light of the U.K.'s implementation date and in light of the Swiss implementation date, and we see also that Singapore have made some announcements overnight, that we would probably have more flexibility; enough to implement legislation during the end of 2022, 2023 with a start date probably at the start of 2024. But those decisions will need to be made by the incoming Government.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

You have answered the question I was going to raise, which referred to your reflective document and to quote you thus time: "It is very likely that we will produce some reflective documents in the early course of next year, which will reflect on the progress made, reflect on the Jersey position but also act as a sort of consultation document." I take what you say, that is ... I am not sure how long the early course of next year lasts for but from what you say it may have slipped slightly?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I think because of those international events and what other countries have done that has given us a little bit more flexibility than we envisaged when I sat before you previously. I will just say that the first draft of that reflective paper hit my inbox last night. So it is making good progress. I expect probably to be in a position ... once I have given it approval, it then has to go through all of the governmental process. We will obviously share a copy with you, Chair, and with the Council of Ministers. So it will, I expect, be issued some time before Easter.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

On the same matter - this relates to the Crown Dependencies taking a common approach - will your reflective document take their comments into consideration or is that something completely separate?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

They will also have sight of it during that process as well so that there is a no surprise policy. That is what we commit to with our colleagues. You will be no doubt aware that Guernsey issued a media statement on Monday, I think it was, where they are doing a piece of work with Deloitte to look at some of the potential implications of Pillars One and Two on their corporate tax regime. We are working closely together and we need to be aligned. It is probably fair to say that we are slightly ahead of the curve because we have been working on this and thinking about it for a long time. So we will not need to use external consultants in the way that our colleagues are doing because we have been, as I say, working with industry and experts for a number of months now.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Going back to the Guernsey position and employing Deloitte as outside consultants, does that raise a prospect of their taking a different view on certain aspects than the Dependencies as a whole?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I do not think so.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Is there also a potential delay in your decision-making process, Minister, if we are aligned as hard as we can to meet all of the C.D.s (Crown Dependencies) together.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

No, I think we have made really good progress and the reflective paper will point to that. Of course one of our difficulties is that we are then going into an election and the current timeline from the O.E.C.D. is that they would be seeking sign-up to a multilateral instrument possibly during the end of our election period, or maybe just after, so that might delay us signing up in the first round of signing but I would expect the incoming Government to be signing up certainly in the second round or the first round, dependent on when it is.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

You will not be in a position to sign anything before we get to ...

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I will not be able ... it will not be available for signing by then. The timeline is currently for signing at some point in June and that is just the nature of things. Over 140 jurisdictions have signed up to the political consensus. It is not unusual for at least one of them to be going through an election

period when such an international document is open for signing. That is fully understood by the O.E.C.D.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Will there be an advantage to signing early, Minister, or do they have to wait for just about everybody to be signed before we move?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

So signing of course is important. But equally a commitment to the minimum standards and to changes is just as important. So I do not think there is really any advantage or disadvantage. It is just the fact that we are in an election period and I recall when we have had to sign other instruments with the O.E.C.D., some of our colleagues have been in election period and it is neither benefited or disadvantaged.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

If we have not signed, Minister, have we given a commitment?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

We have already given a commitment to the political consensus, if you recall.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

That is a very diplomatic answer, Minister. Is there a possibility that your successor, on the basis you might not be in the job after the election, have a different view to you on these things?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I hope you are not making me party to a Progress government manifesto position. I am joking. I cannot envisage that an incoming Minister, whoever that might be, would not make a decision in the best interests of Jersey in the medium and longer term and being signed up to international obligations and international consensus like this is in our interests. But there are some quite tricky nuanced policy decisions which are still to be made.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Can I ask from a practical point of view, because you have to accept times are changing, how will it be implemented into Jersey's tax structure?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

There will have to be legislative change.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

So it will be through legislation.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes, the States will have the final say.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

So it still rests with the States?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

It does. The legislative change will ... the political commitment will, in due course, require legislative change which the States will have to agree.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

I know it is a long way off but is there any indication of when that might happen?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

With our current thinking, as I have just indicated, is that legislative changes would need to come at the end of this year.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

This year?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

You mentioned earlier, Minister, the fact that you went to the U.S. in December last year to discuss those matters related to the inclusive tax framework. Do you have any further visits planned before election?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Not directly related to this in the same way that the U.S. trip was. I do have other trips envisaged. I think I am intending going with the C.W.E.I.C. (Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council), which is the Commonwealth body to Dubai in March. Other than events in London, I think that is probably going to be it before the election. The Chief Minister is intending to go stateside in early March, I think. His visit will be more in New York, focused on J.F.L. things and then he will go over

to New Jersey to focus on that relationship and the M.O.U. (memorandum of understanding). I think he might also pay a visit to the Embassy in Washington as well.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

My final question in this area is: again I think on your last trip to the U.S. you made reference to discussions with key decision makers on Pillar One and Pillar Two; are they being followed up in any way?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes, there have. As I indicated earlier, the optimism in Washington about the meeting, the timeline, even in early December, has not quite proved to be the reality of the situation. As we all know, it played out very publicly, the Build Back Better legislation and how that did not get through the Senate. It does need to get through in order to give effect in U.S. legislation to the necessary changes. There is currently, as far as I am aware, no timeline for that legislation to go back but you will see the President and the White House are very much pushing that as a wider part for the American post-COVID investment. So they will certainly try again. Of course they will then later in the year, like everybody else, still have the implications of ensuring that they are able to implement Pillar Two. That was always going to be more in October time. What that means for the October timeline, in mind that they have not got that Build Back Better legislation through at the end of last year, I cannot be sure. But the meetings that we have had, and the individuals that we have met, of course are being followed up.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you for that. I envy you your ability to escape a month full of States sittings in March.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Well it is not going to be quite like that, is it? I have to fly in and fly out quickly to get as many debates on the Island Plan as I can.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I move on to something we discussed; sanctions.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

We touched on it briefly before but if international community are starting to apply or bring in sanctions are there any particular challenges to Russian assets to Jersey?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I do not think there are any particular challenges. We have the legislation in place which gives us the vires to issue those sanctions and for the assets to be frozen. We have the mechanisms in place. We have, of course, you will always remind us, that we also have other legislation in place to do everyday asset freezes if we suspect people are in breach of A.M.L. and C.F.T. obligations.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Some commentators have suggested (audio cuts out)

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

The legislative ability to take A.M.L. and C.F.T. asset freezes of course is one that is taken independently to meet our obligations to ensure we comply with the F.A.T.F. standards, which will be reviewed by MONEYVAL, is absolutely right. When it comes to international sanctions, either the U.N. or U.K., of course we have to work in concert with international organisations. Those sorts of sanctions only work if the international community come together. The U.K. is responsible for our foreign policy as a matter of international law. They are the one that have the intelligence agency, they are the one who are connected to international intelligence agencies, and these are the agencies that understand where sanctions would be best placed to have maximum effects. It is really a little bit nonsense to think that we would, as an Island community, make these sanctions ourselves. It would be constitutionally inappropriate and we do not have, as I say, those intelligence agencies to make good decisions. Therefore it would not stand up if we were to suffer legal challenge.

[13:30]

And, most importantly, Jersey making a sanction on its own would not have the deterrent effect that sanctions are all about.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

If Russian sanctions are imposed, which target a large number of specific individual businesses, is there a risk that not all Russian assets held in Jersey are identified by local financial service businesses once you make the Order.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

That risk applies with all sanctions, of course. We have to be clear of that. Any sanction that is issued there is an obligation on the service provider to review their business to comply with the sanctions. Richard will remind us that they have good processes in place to do that, mostly technology led. That is what they are obliged to do. From time to time we have service providers who have got relationships with individuals or companies where there are sanctions in place, and

they have to apply to the Minister to either make a payment or do a particular action, and we deal with that appropriately. We have got no reason to doubt that service providers have not got the facilities in place and the ability to do anything other than comply with sanctions. Of course the regulator also has a supervisory role as well in that.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

(several inaudible words)

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes.

Assistant Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I can just briefly add to that. It is part of any financial services organisation's due diligence to know exactly where the assets are to be held by customers. You know that as well as I do. It is their job to make sure that it is a regular check. All they have to do is check the international sanctions list on a daily basis and run it through their database to make sure that they are still complying and they have no clients that are sanctioned. Because it is not just countries that change, individuals have changed as well. It is a daily process that is required by the vast majority of financial organisations.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

(audio cuts out)

Assistant Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes, they have their own section. They look at the whole integrity of Jersey's financial services regulation and of course sanctions are a very important part of that. Yes, they will be checking.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

The panel note in a recent article by the *Washington Post* that sanctions applied to Russia could, and I quote: "Boomerang on U.S. and European economies, particularly if Putin retaliates." Have you undertaken any assessments about potential impacts on Jersey's economy, in particular if financial services industry sanctions were imposed on Russia?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

This goes really to the heart of why you have to act in concert with the international community because there may indeed be countersanctions. Without knowing what those sanctions are in practice it is very difficult to do an analysis. We are not reliant ... you know, some parts of Europe are very reliant on Russian energy. We are not. I think that is the greatest safeguard against countermeasures that the Russian Federation might take.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

But I would have thought the U.K. generally would (audio cuts out)

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I have got no doubt that of course they are and they do.

Assistant Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I think also there is a wider consideration. I mean most banks will have a country risk matrix within their risk management process so they will be looking at country risk and also financial institutional risk because the imposition of sanction does not only affect them, it can also affect the banks if they have counterparty arrangements with those banks who are very heavily dependent on Russian business or have a strong presence on their board or their shelves of Russians. Those are considerably more vulnerable so I am sure there is a degree of risk breaking down already in that respect.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Are there any challenges associated within imposing new sanctions during the election period, in particular if the situation deteriorates further during the time?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

No challenges whatsoever. All Ministers remain Ministers through the election period and signing a sanctions order would fall firmly in a decision which ought to be made during the purdah period.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Just a general question: do we know how much exposure, how much involvement does the Island have with funds emanating from Russia, or even the former Soviet bloc, I suppose?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Well, I do not obviously have figures.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

No, I would not say the figures but do you have a feel for it? Have we avoided this or have regarded this as being ...

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

No, there is Russian business in Jersey, as there is right across Europe, and there will be assets held and administered here in Jersey where the beneficial owners are Russian. Of course what the

U.K. and the international community is seeking to do in bringing forward sanctions, if they bring forward sanctions, and it looks likely that they will, is target those who are closest to or directly connected with the Putin administration.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I understand that and one would hope possibly that some of those would be identified by their service provider already.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Well, without a doubt they would, yes. I understand the sanctions bit ... so with regard to Zimbabwe is a sanctioned country but only certain individuals in Zimbabwe have been sanctioned. Not everyone who does business outside of Zimbabwe has been subject to a sanctions regime. It is selective.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Thank you. If I could move on to ... I will just ask one last question about sanctions. You mentioned today the checks (audio cuts out) but how often does a sanction that might have been imposed from the U.K., come into effect throughout the globe and have a knock-on effect in Jersey? Is it something that happens once a week, once a month, on a daily basis, a number of times on a daily basis?

Assistant Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I hate to make generalisations as an answer but in my experience when I was running a bank we received notifications on sanctions weekly and sometimes twice a week, because it is not just the countries that change, it is obviously individuals that change and in the institution that I ran we ran our database (several inaudible words).

The Deputy of St. Martin:

So it is not a rare occurrence. It is something banks are having to deal with on a regular basis.

Assistant Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Not just banks but trust companies, especially if they are international facing it is obviously something you have to keep your eye on.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

The sanctions are not imposed by the U.K. The Jersey Government imposes the sanctions by either legislation change or order but, of course, what might happen, as Richard says, the reason it is done daily is there might be a standing sanction in place and something might change on an entity with a bank account or a company or fund where they do not get picked up on that overnight or that daily

review even though the sanction has been a longstanding sanction. They still have to do that work even though the sanctions situation may not have changed for a fortnight. Something might have changed on the company whereby they have to be ... that is why they check on a daily basis.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

A ballpark figure as to how many longstanding sanctions are in place in Jersey at the moment?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I do not know. Dan was ... I do not know if he still is. He may not know the answer to that. We seem to go through periods where there are a good number of sanctions that come forward and then other times (audio cuts out). Dan, that is a very good question. Do we know the answer to it?

Head of International Compliance:

Sorry, would you mind repeating the question? I cannot really hear. The sound is not very good from the panel, unfortunately.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

The question was how many longstanding sanctions do we have in place in Jersey?

Head of International Compliance:

How many different regimes for different countries, like that?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Do you have any idea how many sanctions are in place right now be it for companies or countries?

Head of International Compliance:

Okay. Well, there is about 30 sanctions regimes but there is hundreds of asset-freezing designations. I am not sure off the top of my head but I think it is close to 1,000.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Okay, thank you very much.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

Can I just ask one quick question? If there is disagreement over whether an asset is within scope, is there a way to question that or appeal that?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes, there is. Dan, do you just want to explain that process? It comes to us, does it not, and you have to deal with it on my behalf?

Head of International Compliance:

If there is a new designation?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

No, if there is a financial services firm, for example, that is not sure whether a company, individual or asset falls within the regime or not, the process that they would then follow?

Head of International Compliance:

If they had a potential match and they were concerned that there may be some connection, usually they would be advised to seek independent legal advice and they also have a reporting obligation to the Minister if there is a potential asset freeze or they suspect there may be a sanctions breach. So it would come to our attention. They can also get in touch with me or with the Jersey Financial Services Commission to see whether something is in scope, but it is set out in the legislation whether or not particular assets or agency is in scope or not. You would expect the individual financial services firm to understand what might be caught and what might not be caught.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Ultimately if they were not satisfied with the Minister's decision taken from advice, they would then challenge that in court. They have a right to appeal to the High Court.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Before that challenge happens, there would be a more informal call with the Attorney General presumably?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

You would expect them to obtain their own legal advice and to inform his or her position based on that advice. George, would you like to ...

Director of Financial Crime Strategy:

Just to add, in practice the entity will almost certainly freeze the assets and will not conduct any dealings on the assets. They are very cautious in relation to those circumstances (several inaudible words).

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

They would not want to breach the sanctions in those circumstances.

Director of Financial Crime Strategy:

There are provisions to determine the individual's right to property and property rights.

Assistant Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

It would be infinitely more comfortable to having your licence removed by the Government. You are on safer ground.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I am tempted to ask the Minister if (several inaudible words).

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

What is the answer in that context? Provide it to them (several inaudible words).

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Minister, on fishing licences, last time you were here on 10th December we were in the throes of ... I am tempted to use the word "negotiating" but it is probably the wrong word. We were still in the throes of issuing the last licences to the French fishing fleet. While I have a number of questions here about licences, I might just cut to the last one and just ask you: are we now in a position where the licence issues have been put to bed and are no longer on the table for negotiation? Have we reached the final point of issuing licences?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Well, as you will be aware, there was an intense period of conversation with the Commission and our French counterparts, together with the U.K., in the run-up to an arbitrary deadline of 10th December. No further licences have been issued since that time, even though we have had a number of meetings with French ministers, so that takes us to 130 licences. As we sit here, we have no grounds or evidence to issue any further licences nor have any grounds or evidence been provided whereby we would issue any further licences. The grace period, as it were, for those vessels which had temporary licences until the end of January has now expired. Those vessels are not licensed, we think, appropriately. They are not licensed and we are in conversation with our U.K. colleagues and in due course with the E.U. and French about moving on to the conversations around extent and nature and the conditions that will be placed upon those 130 licences which have been issued. I cannot say with any certainty, however, that the French may in due course seek to persuade the E.U. to trigger an arbitration mechanism to challenge our licensing decisions around those vessels which were not licensed. That may happen.

[13:45]

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Can I just check, Minister, it would be exactly as you just said, it would be the French to persuade the E.U. to engage in the arbitration rather than the French making that decision unilaterally?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

That is correct.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Do you, therefore, expect or have you got any further meetings in your diary to talk about licences?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

To talk about licences, no, but officials are continuing their probably nearly daily engagement with D.E.F.R.A. (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) officials about - just thinking of the way that I would describe it - a proposed approach to licence conditions going forward.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

You mentioned nature and extent, Minister, and that is the next phase of this saga, if I might call it that. Are you involved in nature and extent discussions at all?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Well, how does it work? Marine Resources officials work with D.E.F.R.A. officials and with the Minister for the Environment to develop a scheme. My officials are from time to time apprised of where they are with that scheme and they will then in due course come and speak to me about it. The decisions are the decisions for the Minister for the Environment but, of course, because they involve the U.K., E.U. and French Government, they require the support of the External Relations Department and Minister for External Relations but they are not my decisions.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

In the previous arrangement for licences, conditions on licences were given to or put on by French boats to a certain type of fishing or type of metier in certain areas. Our understanding is that it will be those measures which will be duplicated on to the Jersey licences. Is that your understanding as well?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I think that is the basis of the current proposed approach for extent and nature. My understanding from Marine Resources officials is that those vessels which currently have a Jersey licence are

already complying with the conditions that they would previously have had on their French-issued licence.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Can I just move slightly further, more general, if I may? Have you had any meetings with France, Normandy and Brittany in particular, to try to rekindle our - "rekindle" might be too strong - close relationship with our neighbours? Are you meeting them on other subjects, different diplomatic discussions?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Well, we have prior to Christmas when we had our normal round of meetings. There are other meetings in the diary pre-election, but it is fair to say during the course of January most of the engagement was simply about fishing and licensing matters.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

One of the criteria that we tried very hard to push on negotiations was that we were prepared to issue additional licences provided the French did their part and helped us with exports. One of those we were seeking was the placing of a border inspection post in Granville and I am aware that that still has not happened. Do you mention or do you talk about that with your French counterparts when you meet?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Yes, and with the Europeans and U.K.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Do you sense any traction?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

We, of course, do not normally go into details of conversations with ministers from other governments but it will not surprise you to know - I think it has been made publicly clear - that the French view is that French fishers have asked for more licences than we have issued and, therefore, they maintain their position that more licences should be issued. Therefore, they do not feel able to make progress on other matters, particularly the border inspection post, at this time.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

Given that answer, Minister, can you just explain to the panel what sort of transitional arrangements you might have for the next Minister, should it be somebody else being in the position? How do you leave the situation when we enter purdah and then come out the other side?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Well, it is fair to say that during purdah if there are meetings required in regard to matters like this they will be taken and I will take those meetings and make those decisions. (audio cuts out) There is no doubt in my mind that continuity in relationships is (audio cuts out)

Senator S.W. Pallett:

This current situation with (audio cuts out)

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

I do not think we will see much change from ease of getting on and off. We know it was patchy since Brexit. It potentially is not helped by, although it might be, the fact of where the ferries for passengers is now docking but, of course, we know that there are actions of individuals that can make things difficult and create friction at the border. I would expect that certainly in the run-up to April/May time that will continue. We would hope that that might ease during the course of the summer as things start to settle down. Access to the market at French ports is - the most positive thing I can probably say - variable. Sometimes it is reasonably straightforward and other times those requiring to go alongside find it challenging and difficult and their paperwork is challenged; other times it is quite straightforward. Of course we know of the overarching implications of being a third country since vessels are no longer allowed to be brought alongside in France and we know about the categorisation of waters and all of those things, which I believe worked.

Senator S.W. Pallett:

What is the issue in terms of access to ports?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

It is much more difficult for individual fishermen to access ports than it was pre-Brexit and that remains the case.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I have just about got to the end of my fishing questions, Minister, but if I could just take you back to the supply chain, which you mentioned earlier. We know that 98 per cent of our goods come through the ports and the vast majority of that will come via the U.K. We see very clearly that the trade across the Channel is not what it was before Brexit happened. Do you have any discussions with U.K. Ministers about difficulties for lorry drivers and goods to come across the Channel or under the Channel?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

We do, and there is no doubt that over the last number of months it seems to have got more difficult. We see more narrative of trucks struggling to go through all of the checks at the border. It is fair to say, and I am not going to be an apologist for the British Government, that at a ministerial political level there is a strong belief that the U.K. does not need to be implementing bureaucratic checks that mirror the ones that the E.U. has. That does not, unfortunately, seem to be what is happening in practice but we do have those and I have those conversations with British ministers. I take the political view that for us here on the Island we know that we are facing an increasing cost of living. We see the latest inflation figures. We know that there are supply chain difficulties for the United Kingdom which have an effect on the cost of goods here. This is an opportune time for us to think about reducing the value within the present supply chain (audio cuts out). You of all people, Deputy, have experience. It is challenging but overcoming that challenge is going to be worthwhile and absolutely necessary.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Just to feed off that, is there much dialogue going on about increasing our trade on the southern boundaries, as you say? Could that not be used as a catalyst for a trade-off on bureaucratic requirements?

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

We are not going to get rid of the E.U. bureaucratic requirements that they put in place for third countries. The question is how bureaucratic we need to be this side of the water and that is a question really for the U.K. Of course the supply chain routes and all of those sorts of things fall to the Minister for Economic Development and I know that they have continually looked at it and found the barriers too difficult to overcome. My contention now is that overcoming those barriers is part of the answer to the increased cost of living and, therefore, it is worthwhile if necessary seeking legislative change to overcome that.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you for that response and I understand it too. I think we are through our agenda, unless you have anything to add, Minister? If that is the case, can I thank you, Minister, and others not only for today but for your whole period in office for co-operating fully with us and for keeping us up to date with regards to the fishing dispute. Thank you all.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Thank you very much, Chair. This may be - and I will not repeat what I said at the start - the final public quarterly hearing but, as you are aware, we will be needing to come to see you again on a number of those legislative proposals that we have got before the Assembly, so we look forward to continuing to work with you.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, I should say thank you. We have had offers of briefings, which we have yet to respond to, and we do appreciate that. Thank you.

The Minister for External Relations and Financial Services:

Thank you.

[13:58]