

2024.11.12

3.6 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour of the Minister for Children and Families regarding the progress of work on the Children and Civil Status (Amendments) (Jersey) Law 2024: (OQ.210/2024)

Will the Minister provide an update on the progress of work on the Children and Civil Status (Amendments) (Jersey) Law 2024, which was adopted by the Assembly on 19th March 2024, including the consequential amendments and any other work that is necessary to bring the Law into force?

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

Over the summer, work has continued to identify extensive consequential amendments. Officers have now identified 44 pieces of legislation that require both minor and extensive levels of amendment, and that is a considerable increase on the numbers that we quoted earlier in the year. The law drafting process for those is at an advanced stage and I am hopeful that the consequential amendments will be lodged before the end of the year or very early next year at the latest. Any delay will be as a result of those additional consequential amendments, which of course puts more pressure on the Law Drafting Department. An Appointed Day Act bringing the law into force would follow by mid-2025. Meanwhile, officers are working with various stakeholders on preparatory work necessary to implement the law. A set of revised children's rules are also in advanced stage of drafting. This is very complex work but I remain committed to bringing this legislation into force as soon as possible for families who are keenly and patiently waiting.

3.6.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I thank the Minister for his answer. I am delighted to hear that it still seems to be of a higher priority. Could the Minister please advise the Assembly if there is going to be a delay in lodging that and it is going to go beyond the end of this year? Could he please inform the Assembly at the earliest convenience and also the families involved, and how he would go about informing those families of that, please?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

From my point of view, I would like to see this lodged by the end of the year but I also do not want to place further pressure on the Law Drafting Department. The numbers over the summer rose from 33 amendments to 44, which is a 25 per cent increase. Clearly, if there is a further delay, we will bring that forward during the ... we will advise the Assembly. As regards informing the families, I will work with our Communications Department to find a suitable means of doing that.

[10:30]