

# STATES OF JERSEY

## OFFICIAL REPORT

**MONDAY, 4th JUNE 2018**

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[9:30]

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

## **COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER**

### **1.1 Welcome to His Excellency The Lieutenant Governor**

#### **The Bailiff:**

First of all, can I welcome His Excellency, The Lieutenant Governor on your behalf? **[Approbation]**  
It is an important day that we have today and it is a great pleasure to have you with us.

### **1.2 Congratulations to Members on their election or re-election and welcome to new Assembly**

#### **The Bailiff:**

Secondly, can I take the opportunity of congratulating all Members on their election or re-election, as the case may be, and welcome to the new Assembly?

## **APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS, COMMITTEES AND PANELS**

### **2. Election of Chief Minister designate**

#### **The Bailiff:**

The only item of business today is the appointment of the Chief Minister designate and there have been 2 nominations. I am going to ask the Greffier to read the nominations.

#### **The Greffier of the States:**

I received 2 nominations. The first: Senator Ian Joseph Gorst nominated by Senator Moore, Senator Pallett, the Constable of St. Helier, the Constable of St. Lawrence, the Constable of Trinity, Deputy Pinel, Deputy Rondel, Deputy of St. Ouen, Deputy Wickenden and Deputy Truscott. Secondly: Senator John Alexander Nicholas Le Fondré nominated by Senator Ferguson, the Constable of Grouville, the Constable of St. John, the Constable of St. Brelade, the Constable of St. Peter, the Constable of St. Mary, the Constable of St. Ouen, the Constable of St. Martin, Deputy Martin, Deputy Lewis, the Deputy of St. Mary, Deputy Young, Deputy Ash, Deputy Guida and the Deputy of St. Peter. Each candidate has submitted a statement as required by Standing Orders setting out his vision for strategic policy and the manner in which he proposes to discharge his responsibilities as Chief Minister. Those statements have been published.

#### **The Bailiff:**

Under Standing 116, the order in which the candidates are to speak and questioned is drawn by lots and I will now draw the name of the first speaker. I shall tell you who he is in a minute. The process here is that each speaker will speak for 10 minutes. While that person is speaking of course the opponent will have retired. There will then be a period of one hour for questions to the person in question, to the 2 candidates, and we will then proceed to an electronic vote. For the purposes of speaking, the Greffier will ring a bell after 9 minutes to warn you that there is a minute left to come. The media will be asked to withdraw fairly shortly because you are not going to be filming these speeches or the questions. The first speaker will be Senator Le Fondré. I therefore ask Senator Gorst please to retire and we will call upon you in due course.

#### **Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier:**

While the media are retiring, could I ask a question? It is a point of order. As the candidates have been making deals with various people as to who is going to be their Ministers, in the interests of transparency should not all Members declare before they ask questions whether they have accepted a position or are being considered for a position or done a deal of some sort?

### **The Bailiff:**

The appointment of Ministers is a matter for the Assembly and therefore no Member can accept a position insofar as respective ministries have been offered. It seems to me those are questions that anyone can put to the candidates. That should ensure that the information comes out into the public domain. The media have withdrawn. The Greffier is ready with his bell. Is Senator Le Fondré ready? Then I call on Senator Le Fondré.

### **2.1 Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I would like to welcome all the new Members as well to this first sitting. Even after 12½ years I still have a feeling of pride in representing Islanders. What do I offer? Integrity, inclusiveness and teamwork. A fresh approach from a professional, a chartered accountant and an experienced politician. I stood for Senator because I wanted an Island-mandate to make a difference for our Island in a senior position. Having watched the problems faced by the previous Council of Ministers with the in-fighting and lack of leadership on key projects, such as the hospital, I felt it was time for a change in approach. I want to enable all Members in this Assembly, including Back-Benchers, to have the opportunity to contribute to more. Today, Members will make one of the most important decisions of the next 4 years. This decision will set the tone and structure of how we are going to operate and it also sends a message to the public as to whether we are listening to them. There is one thing I need to address, which relates to personal comments that have been made about me, in particular to new Members. I am not and have never been homophobic. I have always, when present, voted for civil partnerships, and I did vote for the introduction of equal marriage as part of the Second Reading. It was a passionate and hard debate and a democratic decision was arrived at. Yes, for friends of ours who are gay, there was some understanding and there was also some discomfort. But to be called homophobic would be a lie and to paraphrase Kipling: "Do not deal in lies." Perhaps the best email I had on the matter came from Liberate the day after the debate, and I quote: "It was right that the tolerance clause was debated publicly and every other jurisdiction in the British Isles has had to have a similar debate when introducing same-sex marriage. If you do not allow this kind of debate people feel their voices have not been heard and that breeds resentment. I thought that you personally worked tremendously hard on Thursday to keep what is a very complex order on track and were one of the few Members who had a grip on where we were at any stage. Thank you also for your even-handed explanation of how Members should vote on each part of the legislation. Other Members might not have been so helpful or honest!" To move on. Of course, I am delighted with the support I received in the Senatorial election from the voting public, coming third overall. One in 2 voters voted for me. I ask those Members who might be unsure to remember what they heard on the doorstep. It is time for a change at the top. It would be wrong of me not to pay tribute to Senator Gorst's hard work, particularly his effort behind the scenes at Westminster with Senator Bailhache. Brexit is probably the greatest issue in a generation. This is a defining moment for Jersey. In my view, any Chief Minister cannot properly deal with the key risk facing this Island externally as well as deal with the economy and the other fundamental issues facing Islanders. That is why I see Senator Gorst focusing on this in his role of Minister for External Relations. This is not a zero-sum game. If you vote for me Senator Gorst does not lose. Many would say quite the opposite. Everyone gains. There is clearly a level of dissatisfaction with the current Council of Ministers, whether it is taxi drivers, unions, elements of the finance industry, nurses or from hospitality. Remember the waste charge, for example? The message I receive is that Jersey feels disconnected from its government. It is clear that whatever we have been doing around engagement is not working. This has to change. Senator Gorst has recently said it is not satisfactory and that he will change. But in the 6½ years he

has been in the position why has he not tried a new tack before now? I offer a different approach and what would that look like? I want to re-engage both with this Assembly and the public and for part of this I want to create policy development boards involving front line providers, users and politicians. As policy develops dialogue must continue to flow between them to ensure that politicians have got it right. I am clear, this must involve Back-Benchers as well as Executive Members but we must ensure we do not breach either the Troy Rule or damage Scrutiny. If done right this could strengthen the role of Scrutiny. Another part of the solution will be using our creativity and innovation to make that engagement interesting and current. There is a lot more information that we could easily be putting into the public domain. I am passionate about public sector reform and I want to see it implemented. Projects that could have been started 8 years ago have not happened and that has cost us tens of millions of pounds, which as a taxpayer I resent. Look at the population policy. A key issue for the electorate. We saw an interim population policy just before the last elections, which was meaningless. We have let in around 4,000 people when the target was 1,300. At this rate we will reach 200,000 during the lifetime of my children. This is not sustainable. Let us be clear, I have always supported the principle of a new hospital but leadership of the project has been a public relations disaster. It is frustrating that a recent proposition to basically do a review was rejected by the Chief Minister but since facing public opinion he has done a U-turn. This review could have been underway already. Similarly at Scrutiny, we had to fight for time to look at the hospital funding when the Ministers were arguing there is no time. Yet later, in a knee-jerk reaction, the Council of Ministers withdrew the debate. Yet more delay.

[9:45]

So I welcome the fact that there will be a final like-for-like review and believe it should be short and sharp, aiming to report back by the end of the year. Equally, I want to see mental health much further up the agenda, which partially ties-in to sports, arts and culture. We need to be doing more. The standard of living has generally been falling. In the next decade the U.K. (United Kingdom) will have a better standard of living than us. One of the greatest internal challenges we face is how to improve our rate of productivity growth, otherwise our standard of living will decline further. Recently, it was made clear in briefings from the States Economic Adviser that productivity has not had enough focus in the past few years. While I welcome that belated recognition it is extremely frustrating, given that a number of Members and panels have been highlighting this for quite some time but no one has been listening. It has also been very clear that economic growth has only been achieved by increasing the population, getting more people producing rather than getting people producing more. This has therefore generated the pressures that we are now seeing in population, affordable housing, and services in general. It is crucial to encourage our small businesses to improve their productivity and we also need to focus, in particular, on competition and enhancing skills and vocational training. The massive change in technology is with us now. Robotics are here and cannot be ignored. There will be consequences and advantages. It is a gigabit island. We are in a good place for that journey. To be a Chief Minister it is good to have a variety of experience. I would be the first Chief Minister with a background both in Scrutiny and the Executive. If it is important to achieve consensus then I have the best experience to do that. I represent the Island internationally with l'Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie and I work with Members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords with the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly. When on the Executive I was signing more decisions than certain Ministers. The department is producing around 100 decisions a year, including around £12 million in property sales. As a trustee of Les Vaux Housing Trust, I understand a number of the problems facing social housing and also about financing for large capital projects. Whether it is within the States or externally when I was working in the private sector or even in volunteer projects I have led teams. To be clear, I do not have all the answers to all the issues but I believe we are better working together and talking to each other. A diverse team is critical. There is a wealth of experience either in this Assembly or in the world outside of

this Chamber. It is my job to bring that knowledge together. So with me, you will get decisions, even on tricky subjects, but based on evidence, facts and advice. Both Members and of course Scrutiny will need access to those same facts. One of the key weaknesses we have had is poor communication and lack of engagement. You are either used to talking to people or are not. It is my understanding that communication within the Council of Ministers was poor. I am very clearly of the view that the Council of Ministers should be having robust discussions on key areas at an early stage. It is not acceptable that items are lodged by the Chief Minister without the Council of Ministers having proper time to consider them if they are important. We need to take much more care of the economy than has happened previously so that it translates into a better standard of living for all Islanders. I believe I can provide the leadership we need and be a symbol for change but also represent stability. Together we can reconnect people of Jersey and the Parliament of Jersey back to the Government of Jersey. As a fresh team, this is about focusing on tomorrow and dealing with the fundamental problems ahead of us and achieving a better future for our special Island in the long term. Rigour, strength, courage and integrity, that is what I offer. The choice is yours and I hope you will consider me for your vote. Thank you. **[Approbation]**

### **The Bailiff:**

For the benefit of new Members, I can inform you that the Deputy Greffier has demonstrated what happens if your machine goes off and she will be making a contribution to a charity. **[Approbation]** Question time is going to start in just a moment. May I say that although we have an hour I have no doubt almost all Members will want to ask questions and so I am not going to allow supplementaries until everyone has had an opportunity to ask a question if they want to. I am sure there will be time for supplementaries but we are not going to have question time, as it were, being dominated by one person at the outset. I call on Deputy Higgins.

#### **2.1.1 Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

Could I ask the candidate - I know he believes in openness and transparency- whether he will explain to the States which groups he has had talks with and individuals he has had talks with, and which positions he has either promised, so far as he can put it forward, the roles that they are going to play?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I have tried to speak to everybody in the Assembly between the elections and swearing-in and today. The only people I have categorically offered spaces to are Senator Gorst for External Relations, Senator Vallois for Education, Senator Mézec for Housing and becoming a Children's Minister, and I have also confirmed with the Deputy of Grouville that I support her suggestion of what we have called a Minister for International Relations, which will basically build on her work of Overseas Aid and the other experiences to run in parallel with the work of External Relations, which for the next year or so is going to be very much focused on Brexit, Brussels, Whitehall. I think it is important, I agree with her concept, that we then keep that parallel work going to grow the Jersey persona, for example, in Africa and other charities. I hope that clarifies matters.

#### **2.1.2 Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

Just on behalf of Reform Jersey, to congratulate Senator Le Fondré on his election as Senator. I would like to ask him what priority he will give to implementing the recommendations from the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry. If he is elected as Chief Minister would he commit to meeting at the earliest stage possible with the Children's Commissioner to hear some of her views about what needs to be done to improve Children's Services on the Island, and would he further to that agree for a tour of the Children's Services to meet some of the young people who are affected by those services so that we can treat their voice seriously moving forward on this?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

The short answer is yes, in terms of meeting both the Children's Commissioner and a tour of Children's Services. In respect of the Care Inquiry, the Senator has left himself slightly exposed because if I do get elected as Chief Minister he will be the Minister for Children and it will be his responsibility to make sure everything is implemented. I hope that clarifies matters.

### **2.1.3 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier:**

The first, I hope, of many "how" questions; we have a wish list but we need to know how it is going to be delivered. The first question would be: how does the candidate propose to pay for increased services to our increasingly elderly population? What changes to tax or social security benefits does he envisage?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

One thing I have made very clear is that one of the first pieces of work that needs to be done is the understanding of the interaction between income support - effectively like cash in the pocket - the impact of the income tax system and the overlaps, including disregards. That as a piece of work is important to understand our overall position. In assessing the ageing population issues as a whole, we do know we have funding pressures ahead. We have a number of funding pressures that have come out of a review of that tax system. Whether it is through income tax changes or social security changes I cannot comment at this stage, but part of the approach on everything has got to be bringing a team together and understanding the data first. The Deputy is correct though, there is no free lunch on this. We do know that there are efficiencies coming out of the system, which is ... I do not mean it that way in terms of which are meant to generate millions of pounds but we do not have certainty on that in terms of we do not have data on that at that stage. That is my normal fall-back position. However, going forward, if that then means, yes, we will be looking at social security rates and things like that, that is a discussion to be had. Obviously, any decision is subject to this Assembly.

### **2.1.4 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:**

Does the candidate commit to improving mental health service provision in Jersey and, specifically, would he consider an independent review of mental health service provision in the Island to find out what deficiencies may exist and what improvements can and should be made?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

One of the key things that certainly came up during the Senatorial elections ... one of the key issues is mental health. What I have said in the past, and what I envisage, is the creation of a board specifically to look at mental health made up of politicians, so Executive and some non-Executive if possible, but the objective being that the politicians seek to understand from front end ... when I say "users" I mean G.P.s (general practitioners) and the front-end professionals who deal with the service but also, in a sensitive way, the - I will use the word "customers" - whether it is the children, do not forget adult mental health as well, who have gone through the system and know the faults with that system, certainly as I understand there are faults there. Only through that understanding can we then seek to improve it. That would be my approach. That, if you like, is the equivalent of an independent review but I would think we could do it internally with politicians. That is about trying to re-engage that connection with stakeholders. I do not like that expression. It would be one of my top priorities and somehow seek to get it going within a matter of weeks.

### **2.1.5 Connétable D.W. Mezbourian of St. Lawrence:**

I congratulate my former Deputy on his elevation of the role of Senator. I also congratulate Deputies Morel and Guida on being elected as new Deputies to St. Lawrence, and I look forward to working with them and to working with Senator Le Fondré, if he is elected as Chief Minister. But in the Senator's statement I saw no reference to the States Employment Board. My question to him is: if he is elected as Chief Minister would he chair that board and what would the strategic direction be?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I welcome the thanks from my former Constable and also I pass on those congratulations once again to both successors in the Deputy position for St. Lawrence. In relation to the States Employment Board, in terms of strategic direction I have not yet identified... and that is a team discussion once the Council of Ministers has been created. That is not a single person discussion. Would I chair it? My understanding is that the previous Chief Minister had delegated that chairmanship downwards, I think that comes down to capacity. So it is not a decision made yet. This is why we have this time between the appointment of Chief Minister and the appointment of Ministers going forward to iron out those type of issues. There is no decision on that yet. I have had some expressions of interest of people who might be interested in the S.E.B. (States Employment Board) but again, as I said, it is a discussion to be had as part of a team once that team has been created.

**2.1.6 Deputy R. Ward of St. Helier:**

I would like to ask the candidate how under his leadership he would manage the relative influence of the Assembly, the Chief Executive, and Scrutiny over possible future reshuffles and the loss and creation of ministerial roles?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

Sorry, what was the last part. I heard “loss of creation”?

**Deputy R. Ward:**

The loss and creation of ministerial roles.

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I think I still am President of Scrutiny - I am not too sure if that has fallen yet or not - I would very strongly support the role of Scrutiny. I think that is one of the things I bring to this role is that I would be the first Chief Minister who has sat in both sides of the Assembly. Ensuring that the role of Scrutiny is maintained and strengthened, and as the Deputy maybe aware, with the Chairmen’s Committee, we I think did succeed in strengthening the role of Scrutiny towards the end of the last Assembly with (a) the new code of engagement and (b) Scrutiny being able to put witnesses on oath. In terms of dealing with changes and creations of Ministers, Standing Orders on the reshuffle prevent anything happening on that for 6 months and I am very cognisant of the need to give the Assembly full and proper notice of anything that is proposed. The Assembly can always challenge any Order that is in place. In terms of creation of roles, my advice has been new roles of Ministers can be created and potentially elected by this Assembly before the summer recess. But again, it is about giving the Assembly due notice if that were to happen. I would just also mention that the structure that we have, which I did circulate last night in terms of the underlying departmental structure, does not correlate with the Ministers that have to be appointed at the end of this week. Therefore that is why getting that team in place will require changes and will require changes fairly swiftly to try and pick and get the best system. Again, that is a discussion for the team over the next few days, if the Assembly elects me as Chief Minister.

[10:00]

**2.1.7 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier:**

Will the Senator join me in welcoming a newly elected Member of the States Assembly of Portuguese origin and does he agree with me that this is an historic step towards the diversity of our government? If elected Chief Minister will he make for the further improvement of our gerrymandered electoral system and the achievement of voter equity, one of his strategic priorities. **[Approbation]**

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**



I have known the candidate referred to for many years and, yes, I do welcome her to the Assembly. **[Approbation]** As a matter of record, I think we share the same birthday. In terms of the electoral reform, certainly my position has been that electoral reform is a matter for this Assembly and that would be dealt with at that time. I am slightly uneasy at the Council of Ministers setting a strategic objective of changing the electoral composition, but that again is a discussion for the Council of Ministers because it is their strategic policy it will come through. Whatever happens, it is a free vote in this Assembly. So, that is a matter for the Council of Ministers when it is created.

### **2.1.8 Connétable C.H. Taylor of St. John:**

With Brexit as such an important issue, can you confirm that you speak French and can you expand on your role ... sorry, it is through the Chair. I hope, Sir, it was through the Chair. Can you confirm that the candidate speaks French and can you expand ... **[Laughter]** can the candidate expand ... I was reading what I wrote instead of off the hoof. **[Interruption]** Can the candidate expand on the role of the B.I.P.A. (British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly) and the French Parliament or the French-speaking Parliament?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

*Merci. Oui, je parle français,* and I shall stop there. Yes, I do obviously speak French and I was very lucky. I was a student in the south of France, in Montpellier, for a number of months and then when I worked in Luxembourg that brought the French back up again, although it was a slightly different accent because it was a lot closer to Belgium. The role of B.I.P.A. particularly, the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly, is effectively, as I have always understood it, a creation of the Good Friday ... well, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man's involvement came as a result of the Good Friday Agreement and is basically a method of getting politicians from the Republic of Ireland, from Northern Ireland, from England and then the devolved Assemblies and then the Crown Dependencies all talking to each other. From Jersey's point of view, it is a very, very useful role. It gives us direct contact to a number of parliamentarians and I found it very touching ... touching is the wrong expression, very interesting because one meets people of history. You meet people who have negotiated the Good Friday Agreement. You meet people who have been shot by the I.R.A. (Irish Republican Army) and then a number of years later are in the same room as representatives of Sinn Féin. So that is challenging in interesting times but it is fascinating. Obviously, what myself and Deputy Kevin Lewis do or what we are there for is to represent Jersey, to fly the flag, to explain sometimes the constitutional position of Jersey and the benefit of Jersey and the Crown Dependencies to the United Kingdom. From that point of view, it is a very interesting role and I think it is very relevant these days. In terms of the Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie, it is not dissimilar in context to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in that it is a group of French-speaking and French-influenced countries, obviously France, Belgium, Switzerland, and the cantons in Switzerland attend. Jersey is a full voting member but there are obviously other countries that come; for example, the eastern bloc of Europe, Romania, is French influenced, Poland before the Cold War, obviously less so now, much more prevailing to English, and obviously worldwide when you get to the Global Plenary. For example, people who go to the C.P.A. (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association) meet representatives from Canada. Canada sits in both organisations so, again, it is a wonderful opportunity to meet fellow parliamentarians, share experiences and network. Both those organisations I heartily recommend to Members.

### **2.1.9 Connétable J.E. Le Maistre of Grouville:**

If the Senator is successful, what will he do to support agriculture?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I thank the Connétable for the question because it reminds me that I was asked that question pretty well at the R.J.A. and H.S. (Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticultural Society). In fact, I think we

all were, Senatorial candidates. What I said is I just also want to point out what I have done in the past to help agriculture. Obviously, I was very heavily involved, for example, in the bull semen debate. I was very heavily involved, if not instrumental, in getting the dairy up to Howard Davis Farm, and my view was that I was not going to be the Jerseyman that allowed the Jersey herd to wither and die on the Island. That, I think, is the crucial thing. Now, I think around 50 per cent of the Island is farmed. That means if you want to preserve Jersey and its special identity, then farmers have a huge role in that. The 2 key messages I picked up at the time is that farmers need a level playing field. It is expensive to farm in Jersey, and they get less support than they would elsewhere and support has fallen. One of the other matters that comes across, and it has come across many groups that I have dealt with, whether it is in scrutiny or just general feedback we get as politicians, is the lack of engagement and the lack of communication between agriculture and politicians, and we need to improve that significantly. I think the crucial thing as well is support for farmers needs to be real and genuine and actually probably the classic farmers who know the land.

**2.1.10 Deputy J.H. Perchard of St. Saviour:**

I thank the Senator for his comments regarding the same-sex marriage debate in his opening remarks and understand that there is sometimes a need to have difficult conversations to cement shared moral principle in legislation. My question is very much about the nature of the role of Chief Minister when it comes to such moral debates, and it is this. If the amendment known commonly as the tolerance clause were to come back into the Assembly with the Senator as Chief Minister, bearing in mind all that the role of Chief Minister encompasses and represents, would the Senator in that role as a representative of the whole Island vote in favour of the tolerance clause or against it?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I must admit I do not like hypothetical questions because from my perspective we have moved on from the matter. The debate has been had. I do not like readdressing matters and, as I said, it was a difficult debate. I think it was useful for both sides for the debate to be aired and that was the reason for mentioning the comments from Liberate, because they also, if you like, felt that the debate should have been had and was had. But my view going forward is that we are looking for an inclusive society, that we do not want to reopen old debates and that matters have moved on.

**2.1.11 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour:**

Should the Senator be elected as Chief Minister, who would he have as his Minister for Treasury and Resources and why?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I thank the Deputy for her question. I have approximately 4 people in mind for the role, but I have not spoken to all of them and, therefore, do not think it is appropriate to put their names out yet. It will be a team discussion; that is the crucial thing. The team has to agree that everyone will work well together. I want an inclusive approach on that team and that discussion only starts after this lunchtime if you elect me to be Chief Minister.

**2.1.12 Senator K.L. Moore:**

What are the candidate's views in relation to removing G.S.T. (Goods and Services Tax) from food? If he were to retain it, what other measures would he introduce or propose to reduce the cost of living?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

Firstly, can I congratulate Senator Moore on her election? In relation to G.S.T. on food, as I am sure... sorry, it might well have been before Senator Moore's time. When I was in Treasury, the issue of G.S.T. on food was very strong and a very much debated theme. I suspect many older ... senior Members of the Assembly [**Laughter**] might well recall the various debates we had about chocolate

body paint and Jaffa cakes and gingerbread men and all that type of stuff. For new Members, one definitely needs to see the Connétable of St. Clement's ... I cannot remember the actual analogy he used, but I do remember it was very good at the time. The point is that G.S.T. on food I would hope has now gone to bed. I know, having said that, it has come out very, very recently. The issues are who one is trying to help because, very simplistically, if one buys a £200 bottle of wine and there is no G.S.T. on it, that person benefits more than if somebody is buying a tin of beans in the supermarket. However, you cannot take that comment in isolation because what we did at the time is we made sure measures were put in place to offset that cost of G.S.T. to the people who needed that help. That was done through income support, through what was called the G.S.T. food bonus, and through income tax allowances. Now, as a general principle, I have said we would look at income tax and social security, so I would have no objection to just confirming the position as I have understood it. I have absolutely no objection, so if the argument comes back and says the most benefit that would come out of exempting food is this, fine, that would mean that the argument has changed. I do not expect that as an argument, I have to say, but I have no problem in looking at that. What we have done in the past and what I very specifically did, if anybody read my manifesto leaflet, is when the last big debate was had I suggested the money you are going to spend on exempting food, which at that point was about £6 million when G.S.T. was 3 per cent, take that money and apply it across the systems we already had in place to help people. That, for example, meant that the G.S.T. bonus effectively doubled and that has carried on going up. The last time I looked the G.S.T. bonus was helping about 2,000 families. I do not know if that is still current. So, my comment on that is that it is absolutely right to make sure that the assistance we were trying to do at that time is still relevant and current and to reassess. It has been 10 years now since G.S.T. came in. I would suspect that the arguments have not changed, but I have no problem looking at them again.

### **2.1.13 Connétable M.K. Jackson of St. Brelade:**

In his vision, the Senator is relatively silent on working with the Parishes. Could he elaborate how he would anticipate working with the Parishes?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

As the Connétable hopefully knows, and particularly as a former Parish Deputy, I strongly support the Parish system. I believe it is a key aspect of what makes Jersey special. In terms of working with the Parishes and the Connétables as part of the whole vision, a lot of it is about improving engagement and improving public engagement and engagement with communities. Now, certainly, I have not worked this out in practical terms, but in my mind when one does get down to the team of 21 and where we want to put someone, I would hope that we would have a role that seeks to focus on improving that public engagement. That is what I have understood is that there is an issue around improving engagement with the Parishes, with voluntary organisations and those types of areas, and I think that should be something we should be focusing on. I hope that answers the question.

### **2.1.14 Senator L.J. Farnham:**

I think Senator Le Fondré has partly answered the question but I will push on with it. The new chief executive officer of the public sector has presented a new structure of the public sector. Some Members appear to understand that we will be working our ministerial system into that structure. What is the Senator's view on this? Moving forward, how would he see a new ministerial structure? Would he build a structure to fit in with this, either fully or partly, or look at something new and instruct the public sector to build a structure around the ministerial system that this Assembly puts in place?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

Just to be clear, it is the Council of Ministers that determines the engagement that it is going to have between it and the public sector structure. In other words, it is the Council of Ministers, obviously

informed by this Assembly, that determines any structure going forward. The Senator is correct, the structure has changed and the Ministers we presently have do not correlate with the new structure at the public sector level. Again, how that correlates or how that interface happens is a matter for the team in the Council of Ministers but the objective has to be to get far better engagement and understanding between the politicians, to get rid of the political silos and to increase the understanding across the board.

[10:15]

Certainly, one thing I would seek is that using the current terminology, because it may well change - in other words there is sometimes a view as to whether Assistant Ministers should be brought up and given a different title - but using the existing terminology of Assistant Ministers, I would want to see Assistant Ministers working a lot more across the different departments. Because one thing that I have found in looking at the potential of a team being put together is we are quite thin on the ground in certain areas. We have lost a lot of experience in the last Assembly. We have to build up that cross-fertilisation. We have to do succession planning politically so that we are not just dependent on one person. There has to be a lot more cross-circulation between departments and between the ministerial structures.

#### **2.1.15 Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement:**

The candidate has a reputation, fair or not, for having difficulty in making decisions, and perhaps his answer to Deputy Doublet a few moments ago could be cited as evidence of that. How will he deal with that situation if he becomes Chief Minister?

#### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I am aware that there have been some comments made about the inability or apparent inability of myself to make decisions. I make the point to the Connétable of St. Clement - and I am disappointed for him to raise it - that when I was in the position to make decisions, the department was making 100 decisions a year, most of which I was involved in. If I had not been capable of making decisions, the dairy would not be up at Howard Davis Farm. If I had not been capable of making decisions, there would be various other things that would not have happened. If I was not capable of making decisions externally - do not forget external experience as well - Les Vaux Housing Trust would not be ... it is a joint thing because obviously I am one of 7, but we would not be purchasing things. We would not be rebuilding Troy Court and spending £12 million there. Personally, I would not have built a building on the west coast of the Island. So, I hope that shows that in all aspects I have been making decisions. I am capable of making decisions. I just need people not interfering in those decisions when we are trying to make them.

#### **2.1.16 Deputy S.M. Wickenden of St. Helier:**

Firstly, can I congratulate the candidate on moving to the Senatorial benches? In the candidate's statement, I noticed that there was very little in the way of information regarding digital; no surprise that I would be asking a question about digital. With digital being such a vital sector of our growing economy, would the candidate please inform the Assembly what plans he has for supporting the digital economy and the government digital transformation programme and who he has in mind to oversee this important role?

#### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

In terms of who in mind, I have not had any direct discussions with anyone at this stage. There are 2 obvious candidates and, again, that is a discussion for the team after lunchtime today. In terms of the digital project, if you like, and the digital campus, I support the principles of the digital campus. However, I do know that, for example - I was about to say Deputy Vallois and I hope she does hit me for that - Senator Vallois has views in terms of her plans for education, that that should be part of

a wider campus for vocational skills and other areas. But as a principle, digital should be something that is embedded in everything we do. We are in the middle of yet another revolution. We have had the agrarian, we have had the industrial revolution, now we are on to let us call it the digital, the robotic or the A.I. (artificial intelligence). There is no way we can avoid that and, therefore, digital has to be part of our very thinking. It also gives us opportunities to increase productivity and generally possibly ease some of the pressures that this Island is facing. So, from that point of view, I would hope it would be very clear that I am supportive of supporting digital and improving it. The key thing we have to do, because it ties-in to some of the other stuff, is how we get the funding there to do it because I think that is going to be a stream that we are going to have to be supporting.

#### **2.1.17 Connétable R.A. Buchanan of St. Ouen:**

In St. Ouen, we have a number of young families who are desperate to get on to the housing ladder at an affordable level. The availability of land is the key to unlocking this issue, in my view, as there are a number of sites Island wide that could be rezoned without a massive impact on the natural valuable resource that is our beautiful Island. Will the candidate give an undertaking to urgently relook at the Island Plan to see if there are areas that can be unlocked in my Parish to help young families get their own homes?

#### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

As I am sure all candidates know - I certainly was aware of it at the Senatorial hustings - affordable housing and availability was if not the key topic, one of the key topics that came up again and again. So, yes, of course, I think all Members would support anything we can do to improve affordable housing. Part of that aspect will be the Jersey Island Plan review. My understanding is that the review has just started because the housing market review that has been done I believe is due to report back imminently. It is part of the early process of the new Island Plan, which all Members no doubt will be looking forward to when that debate comes to this Assembly sometime in the next 4 years. However, in the meantime - and bear in mind that it would always be a matter for the Minister for Planning - I would be supportive of sensitive village plans that have the support of the Parish and are appropriate to that area. I think that is all one can do without going into the specifics. In terms of affordable housing, I think there is a lot more we should be doing. Again, as I have talked about policy development boards, I would like to see something on affordable housing again set up in fairly short order, across the board Ministers working together but bringing in stakeholders as well where appropriate. That would include Parishes, obviously Andium, housing trusts, *et cetera*. My view there is that we should be looking to release States-owned brownfield sites to assist in that area. I would also like to investigate - because we need to know the financial consequences of it - is there any scope to have some form of modern version of the old States loan system or whether we just do it as a deposit lending scheme, but something along those lines. We need to know what that might look like modelling-wise before we can say yes, we can do it. That is my thought process. I think there is more we should be doing and I think, for example, I would like to investigate the costs of construction, possibly even see if we could find a test site. It might even just be a desktop exercise to see how we get the actual costs of constructing, say, a 2-bed or 3-bed unit and see what they are in Jersey and identify can we produce them cheaper. Because at the moment certainly the message we are getting is £400,000, or whatever the number is, just is out of reach of ordinary families.

#### **2.1.18 Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin:**

In his statement, the Senator has said disappointingly little, indeed next to nothing, about our coast and countryside, fishing and farming, air, water, soil, biodiversity, environmental protection, access to the countryside, sustainable energy. I will not go on. However, in order to be forgiven, would the Senator commit to increasing expenditure in all items that fall under the heading of environment?

#### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I am always very careful about giving commitments without knowing what the quantity is. As a principle, we should all be supportive of the clean air and clean water proposals and of safeguarding our environment, no question. The difficulty with producing the vision statements is what you can in the time you have put in and/or what you may have to leave out, and the Deputy would have added several pages to an already longish document. That does not underrate critically the importance of our environment and what makes Jersey special, so it has my wholehearted support. How we get the funding into that is a different discussion and we need to know what the quantum is on that before one can make any commitment. But as a principle, it is something we need to be seeking to do.

**2.1.19 Connétable R. Vibert of St. Peter:**

My colleague from St. Ouen has, in fact, covered most of my question. However, once again on housing, can I ask the candidate what measures he could put in place to alleviate the current overheating in the lower part of the housing market as we see prices rising again and his views on introducing measures to put controls on the rental market?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

The issues generally around affordable housing and the rental market have certainly been exacerbated by the massive increase in population we have had over the last 4 years. If we have let 4,000 people in when we were planning on 1,300, that has to have had an impact on the availability of accommodation and, of course, that pushes prices up, whether it is on sale prices and/or rental prices. The Connétable may not be aware that I was the individual who brought in the measure to change the 90 per cent. The proposal that the Minister and the Council of Ministers were producing at that time was to require all rents to be set at 90 per cent of market. I brought in a proposal to basically set that as a ceiling, in other words, up to. As a principle, I am fully aware, particularly with my background on the Les Vaux Housing Trust and social housing, of the issues around the pressures on rents. I will just add that for what was quite a simple proposal, and bear in mind it followed U.K. norms, the resistance from the then Council of Ministers was quite amazing. It was quite a battle on the day for those Members who will recall that. So, in terms of what measures, we should be looking at what we can do to mitigate that 90 per cent. There are proposals around freezing rents but we need to know what that looks like. I think one of the other issues I am concerned about - but we need the data on that - is what I will call external buy-to-let, in other words how many outside buyers are accessing the market. **[Approbation]** Thank you very much, because the issue there is particularly if we have any involvement in units being constructed and then bought by external investors, particularly even worse - and this is anecdotal - if those units were not being rented out - we have to establish if that is fact or not - I would be seriously concerned as we would seem to be shooting ourselves in both feet, once by the unit not being owned and secondly by not being available to the market. So, a whole range of areas in there where we need to seek to dampen down the pressures on rent. Part of that does feed into controlling our population as well.

**2.1.20 Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour:**

In the candidate's view, is the Education Department underfunded and, if so, which areas within the department require greater funding and how will funds be raised?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I am slightly nervous of this when I get asked from almost an expert in the education system. Anyway, yes, there are issues within the Education Department. I think we are fully aware of that. We know the Pupil Premium was meant to try and assist on that. I do not know the effectiveness of that. I have the impression that ... sorry, I do recall from one of the Scrutiny reports that the purported increase in the Education budget last time round was negligible once you took into account the demographics. On that basis, I would slightly divert the question to the proposed Minister for Education because I would expect her to be coming back with the full issues and what the demands

were from the system looking forward. Subject to that and on the quantum, that is something we are going to have to address because, again, education fits into skills, apprenticeships, vocational, it fits into productivity, it is all those things. One of the things we also need to address, as I have understood it, is how we retain our valued teaching staff or teachers longer in the system because the turnover rate, which is the wrong expression but the departure rate within that profession, seems very high to me. That seems to be, again, a detriment to our education system and the objectives we have.

#### **2.1.21 Deputy R. Labey of St. Helier:**

St. Helier and the town in general have had many promises made to it in recent times and close to zero delivery on those promises. How do we change the culture and get action and restore St. Helier's faith in the Government of Jersey?

#### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I was trying to recall the element I had put into the vision on urban regeneration, including St. Helier. Just to be clear, because I have a lot of sympathy with this area, hopefully the Connétable of St. Helier will remember this is one of the reasons I have been so passionate about the States paying rates.

[10:30]

Because on the one side I felt it was about fairness, because when the States does compete with the private sector then at least that is recognising a cost that the private sector bears, but on the other side it was a tangible way of getting a new source of funds to all the Parishes, but obviously particularly to St. Helier, and that gives St. Helier something to start then doing small projects to start improving the environment if it so wishes, because it is down to the Parishioners to do so. As a former chairman of the States Paying Rates Working Party, which I sat on with the Connétable of St. Helier, and I think he was an expert in the system already - that goes back to 2006, looking at the Connétable - it has been a battle and I have been consistent in supporting him in that all the way round. So, please do not doubt my support for St. Helier. I have also supported the Deputy in his struggles at La Collette, for example, and Green Street. How we change the culture? Again, I think it is the policy development boards. I think you make sure that you bring across the party politicians, including representatives if at St. Helier - do not forget it is not just St. Helier, it is urban, but obviously we need to make sure that is taken into account - and identify where we are going. I refer you to the vision statement for a bit more detail on that. I hope that helps but, yes, the Deputy is also right. Promises were made in the previous Strategic Plan. I think one of the strategic objectives was investment in St. Helier and it did not happen. I think that has been one of the problems with the system of government we have had up to now and I would very much hope that through better engagement and better teamwork we can avoid that.

#### **2.1.22 Deputy K. Pamplin of St. Saviour:**

I would also like to congratulate the Senator on his recent election, but I would also like to take this moment to congratulate the Greffe, the Deputy Greffe and their team for their efforts in the recent election and also, as a new Member, their support of us in the induction period that we just had. **[Approbation]** If elected as Chief Minister, would the candidate talk about how he would like the issue of assisted dying to be conducted, not only by this Assembly but the wider community? He mentions listening to the public and it is very clear that this is a very important and growing issue for the public. Also on this subject, does he see this as a moment we can improve the overall pathway of care for our health-based charities who are the unsung heroes of community care for our loved ones?

#### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

As a general principle, one of my objectives is to get rid of what I see as a disconnect between the government of the Island, this Assembly to an extent, Scrutiny but, most importantly, the public of the Island that we represent. That has to include the voluntary organisations that, for example, the Deputy refers to. Just as an aside, I absolutely endorse his comments and extend my thanks as well to the Greffe team for all the support they have given all of us during the elections. In terms of assisted dying, it is obviously a very difficult topic and I just stress I am not instinctively against it at all. I can think of various different circumstances we have had in the family where you become aware of the very difficult circumstances that one is facing in end-of-life situations. We are, therefore, very well aware of the difficulties families face at that time, but it does need very, very sensitive consideration and extremely careful deliberation of the moral and ethical arguments. I think we know those issues already. How do we deal with it? Again, it has to be about teamwork. We have talked about speaking to stakeholders and understanding the issues. There are 2 sides. There are people who are severely emotionally affected by their particular circumstances, but there does need to be a wider understanding of the moral argument, shall I say, or the issues about not supporting it. I have to say I do not have a view either way, but we need to seek to understand that as a starting point. I hope that helps.

### **2.1.23 Senator S.W. Pallett:**

The candidate in his written statement states very briefly that we must recognise the many benefits of sport, arts and culture and that good primary care results in healthier populations and reduces health costs. To gain best effect, it will require a co-ordinated approach from various departments if we are to reduce our current levels of heart disease, liver disease and child obesity. Does the candidate support a new strategy for active and healthy living in the Island and who does he see leading this important work to help prevent ill health?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

Again, any decisions on posts will be made if I am in the Chief Minister's role after today, but in general principle, particularly whether it is through sport or the issues around obesity or health or mental health, there will have to be somebody who has responsibility for that role. I would like to see it brought up because I agree entirely with the principles that one is talking about. One has to make sure obviously that if it is within the education system that it can be properly accommodated, but certainly from what I have seen directly it can be accommodated in certain circumstances and it does have benefits. Again, it is part of a team approach and this cross-fertilisation that we have to do, but the Senator is right, we do have to have someone who does focus on that area as one of his or her responsibilities.

### **2.1.24 Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour:**

In the previous Assembly, there was great division not only between the Council of Ministers and Scrutiny and Back-Benchers, but also within the Council of Ministers itself. How would the candidate go about reuniting the whole Assembly?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

That is why the selection of the team is so important. It has to be a team that works together and that is why, as I said, that team in a way has to work together in selecting everybody who comes in, obviously with me starting the process off. In terms of further engagement, it extends at all levels. For example, certainly when I was an Assistant Minister and also speaking to other Assistant Ministers subsequently, sometimes, not always, there is a lack of information flow to the Assistant Minister. I am very strongly of the view that the Assistant Minister should have sufficient information to effectively be able to step into the ministerial role at very short notice. **[Approbation]** That is about making it very clear that that information flow has to go to that Assistant Minister on an automatic basis. Now, then you extend that principle out to Scrutiny, and I have put some points



into the vision document towards the back. It is again about making sure that Scrutiny gets the information that it is entitled to on an automatic basis. That is about changing the mindset. I would hope, therefore, particularly with the adoption of what I call the policy development boards, that we can then get a far better engagement at an earlier level of policy development with all Members. That gives a flavour of where we are aiming to go for. A lot of it is about far better communication and far earlier communication. I think the Deputy is correct. My understanding at the Council of Ministers level is there were occasions when certainly former Ministers did not feel they had had the chance to discuss matters properly. Certainly, I am very clear. I would expect discussions on important topics to be taking place a lot earlier with sufficient time and in a robust way and to allow that process to take place because that is the only way we can improve matters. We certainly have to do better than where we are because, as I said, that disconnect feeds all the way down through this Assembly and then out to the wider world. I have been astounded by the number of people from different sectors - whether it is financial services, hospitality or whatever, - who do not feel communicated with. We have to work on that and that is one way of starting that.

**The Bailiff:**

We have 21 minutes to go on my calculations and 6 Members who have not yet asked a question to ask their question, so we will please keep answers as brief as you possibly can and questions brief. The Greffier will ring a bell with 3 minutes to go and then ring another bell on the conclusion of the period. He will add a minute now to what ... sorry, yes, it is 11, I cannot count. It is 11 minutes to go, I am so sorry. So, Deputy Morel.

**2.1.25 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence:**

I would also like to thank the Senator and my fellow Members from St. Lawrence on their elections to the Assembly. Productivity increases are easily wished for but they are notoriously difficult to deliver. Given that you have expressed a view that increased productivity is key to managing population growth, how do you plan to ensure the Island's businesses are able to deliver these much sought after increases without putting greater stress on their workers and their families?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I think there are so many iterations on how we can address productivity. As the Deputy may recall - and this has been one of my frustrations - in the briefing from the Economic Adviser in here 2 days ago it was stated that productivity had not been given the focus that should have happened over the last number of years. What I found really frustrating, particularly when I think back on various Scrutiny reports and individual Members who have been bringing this to people's attention for so long, to suddenly get recognition from the officer side that this has not been paid attention to sufficiently was slightly justifying all the noise that had been made but was somewhat frustrating. So, I think the starting point, as we have always said, is it is about skills, it is about vocational, it is about proper education, it is about making better use of those who are on the Island who at the moment perhaps might need some more retraining. We know that Jersey in certain areas has worse results or rather produces more people proportionately with few or no qualifications, and that, for example, is something we need to address. It is very clear that things like technology coming through will have massive impacts on productivity. I know that even now in the agricultural world there are robots being used on the Island and that is saving man hours per day. That will have an impact going across. That is something we have to address. There are advantages to it, but there are challenges as well. My view is that particularly somewhere within addressing the standard of living and productivity that that should be a key part or one key focus of the future Strategic Plan, to make sure it does get the credence and the attention that it deserves, because if we get the productivity up it will have massive benefits for this Island without overstressing the resources that are already being stretched as we are now.

### **2.1.26 Senator T.A. Vallois:**

A recent independent review of bullying and harassment and a survey of staff across the States suggests that there are serious issues with culture in the public sector and, therefore, faith and trust in the States. What would Senator Le Fondré do to restore faith and trust should he be successful?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I am fairly certain even in my election leaflet - it feels a bit odd given that it was so many weeks ago now, or it feels like so many weeks ago since I put it together - that I made the point that organisational culture has to change, and the aspect that the Senator has just referred to is one of those key bits. I know she and I and other Members have encountered appalling issues of bullying and harassment in our work as politicians and that is never, ever acceptable. **[Approbation]** One of the problems I find is that sometimes the system, as in the public sector, seems to erect barriers against politicians when they raise this rather than seeking to resolve the problem itself. So, it has to be the tone from the top, and the tone from the top has to be that bullying is not acceptable and that if complaints are made they need to be addressed properly and timely and that if those complaints are upheld, the person who is guilty - if that is the right expression - of that behaviour is properly dealt with. Too often it feels like ... and I do not know if it is an accurate comment or not, but it feels like it is almost swept under the carpet, and that needs to be stopped. That is about the tone that must come down from the Chief Minister to the Council of Ministers, the Chief Executive, into the organisation. That is the only way we can start to address what I think is an appalling issue and has been left in the system far too long.

### **2.1.27 Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade:**

In congratulating the Senator, I would like to congratulate him on his well-deserved election but ask him if he could give his views on the States quangos, particularly the S.o.J.D.C. (States of Jersey Development Company), Jersey Ports and Andium, and whether or not he has any plans to ensure that those bodies' own business plans and activities support the public and the public sector strategic objectives of the Council of Ministers?

[10:45]

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I think we need to be clear that the States-owned entities must follow the States' own strategic objectives and, therefore, if there was any variation with what they are presently doing, that would need to be addressed. What I will say is that from ... as people will know, we have scrutinised S.o.J.D.C. in the past, when I say "we", the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel did. One of the issues around that was whether, when it had been set up, the rules that the States had put in place were being followed. I think that is one of the key things that if an entity has been created under certain conditions then those conditions, it should be ensured, are still being met. I am certainly of the view instinctively I am not in favour particularly of the States setting itself up in competition to the private sector however, unless it is going to generate proper socio-economic benefits, urban regeneration and all that stuff. I do know we have the Island Plan Review and, for example, the review of the Waterfront that is currently going on and we will have to assess the outcomes of those as to how that impacts the behaviour or the activities of those entities going forward.

### **2.1.28 Deputy R.E. Huelin of St. Peter:**

Will the Senator please expand on how he will get the hospital project on track?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

The short answer is, as Members will know, I do support a new hospital; I have always been very clear on that. The frustration has always been that I have started from the principle that I was site

neutral and a particular option was deemed the best tactically supported option, it was quicker and it was cheaper. So I was always disappointed that that option did not seem to come to the fore. What has been very frustrating has been that this has been going on, I think, since 2010 or 2011 - which was when the demand for a new hospital project first started - and here we are in 2018 with a planning refusal on the last application and obviously a new one coming to the fore. What I also found frustrating is that when the Connétable of St. John brought an amendment or a proposal to this Assembly a few weeks ago, it was roundly rejected by the Council of Ministers. That is fine, you bring a debate, you lose it, you move on. However, the Chief Minister, during the Senatorial hustings, effectively did a U-turn and I referred to that in my speech. Whether he was just guided by public opinion or not, but he has now promised a review. So my view is I am disappointed because that review could have been happening already now. I do support a review, I think we need a like-for-like cost comparison on a limited number of sites, very, very few, short and sharp and it needs to be over and done by Christmas so that we have that clarity but most importantly we take the public with us. I think the hospital is probably the biggest project that has captured the public imagination in a bad way on this Island for, I am going to say, a generation almost. It is certainly a decade or whatever it is, 15 years or 20 years. We have to rebuild that trust. If we can rebuild that trust and take people with us, and explain it properly, then we will have achieved a success. The hospital itself has to be achieved and the project has to commence in short order. A short sharp review by the end of the year I would definitely support.

**2.1.29 Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville:**

Encouraging green initiatives is something that I am quite passionate about, as older Members will know. What will the Senator do to put energy on the political agenda and to encourage and ensure that States policies advance and embrace renewable energy?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

In terms of the States policies, I do like this question because if the Deputy does become Minister for International Relations I am sure she will be having an impact in the wider sense on States policies and I would expect her impact on environmental matters and green matters to be quite strong.

**The Bailiff:**

You have less than a minute, Senator.

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I have forgotten the other half of the question, which is particularly helpful. Yes, we do want green initiatives, it is part of the environmental matters that the Deputy of St. Martin was referring to and, again, it is about making and keeping our Island special with the pressures that we are seeing because of the rising population and all that generates.

**2.1.30 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

In the past frequently the States has made decisions which have then been ignored by civil servants and Ministers. How will the candidate deal with this?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I absolutely concur. This Assembly has made past propositions, and looking directly at Deputy Labey of St. Helier at that point, and I was appalled that that decision was not passed down by the Council of Ministers to the related body. As far as I am concerned this Assembly is the guiding force. If this Assembly makes a decision the Council of Minister should implement it.

**The Bailiff:**

Thank you, Senator. That brings your question time to an end and perhaps you could go with the Usher who will collect the member of Greffe staff and Senator Gorst. I invite Members outside to return to the Chamber. Senator Gorst, I shall ask you to start in about a minute's time just to give Members a chance to return.

**Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier:**

Sir, while we are waiting can I ask you a question? You commented in your opening remarks it will be an electronic vote or is it a written vote?

**The Bailiff:**

No, under Standing Orders it is an electronic vote and the first name out of the hat was Senator Le Fondré so Members will vote pour if it is for Senator Le Fondré or vote contre if it is for Senator Gorst. I shall repeat that for the benefit of those who come back later on. Senator Gorst.

**2.2 Senator I.J. Gorst:**

It feels, I imagine, a little bit like the prisoner might feel coming up from the cells into the dock. This is an election about change. It is about the changes we must make to face the real challenges like Brexit, that surround our Island and which threaten our constitution, our history and who we are. But it is also an election about changing how we do things as a public service, a government and an Assembly, so we can serve Islanders better. I do not believe that it is wise at a time of so many changes and such international uncertainty to take the risk also of changing the Chief Minister. We need a Chief Minister with proven experience and sound judgment, with a track record of taking firm and difficult decisions and who has a clear vision, not just of what changes we need to make but also how to deliver them. It is a time for action not just for reviews. My vision is for a competitive Jersey with a strong and sustainable economy and a skilled workforce but which uses our finite resources responsibly and protects our cherished environment. It is a Jersey that grows our collective wealth, which ensures people do not fall behind when the cost of living increases. It is a Jersey that values heritage, culture and our traditional industries of farming, fishing and tourism alongside the economic engine of financial services and the innovation of digital. It is a safe Jersey where Islanders feel secure and valued in a community that respects and protects their beliefs, their ethnicity, age, gender and sexuality and which condemns discrimination in all its forms. It is a healthy Jersey which promotes well-being and supports the vulnerable, those with mental ill-health, the disabled, the elderly and children in our care. All in modern fit for purpose facilities. It is an inclusive, welcoming, outward looking Jersey with a strong voice and a standing in the world. Many people think that is what we already have but not everyone shares in this. They do not have quality affordable housing and they struggle to make ends meet. So the vision I have always pursued is of a society that has a place and a home for everyone, respects and listens to everyone and which acts in the best interests of everyone, whether for families who have been established in our Island for centuries or those who have settled more recently. Whatever our background, beliefs and circumstances, I believe we should all be valued in our Island community. I have always stood up for Islanders' well-being, interests and rights without reservation and without judgment. I have always put Jersey first. This is the very anchor of my values and the core of my integrity. It is what makes me who I am and it is who I will continue to be as Chief Minister. I will ensure that we build on the strength of our wonderful Island while delivering economic security and championing social progress. I hope no one doubts my conviction to do what is best but I recognise that some might have questioned my single-mindedness in delivering it so a further change I offer to colleagues is how I will do this job in my final term. I have listened to what the electorate has said over the recent election and I have had many, many meetings with colleagues in this Assembly over the past 2 weeks, hearing their views and concerns, explaining my intentions about building and leading a coalition with an agenda for lasting change.

[11:00]

I understand that I need to find a better way of doing things. I will be a Chief Minister for the whole Assembly and the whole Island, a consensus builder, working across the floor of this Assembly, leading a government in constructive partnership with Scrutiny to secure the best outcomes for our Island. I will listen more to colleagues and be more collaborative and inclusive in harnessing all the talents for the common good. I will reach out more to Parishes, to stakeholders and to Islanders to better explain what we are doing and to listen to their concerns. Being Chief Minister is not an easy job. It takes a while to grow into it but I have that experience. It has been tested and proven on countless occasions. I have worked with colleagues to rebuild our economy from the shocks of the financial crisis to 5 successive years of growth. I have defended our Island from threats to the financial services industry on which our economy depends by ensuring that we are at the international vanguard on transparency and regulation. I have made our voice heard in Westminster and Whitehall, Downing Street and Brussels at this critical and uncertain time during the Brexit negotiations. I steered our community through the Care Inquiry report while retaining the steadiness of purpose to put the interests of children first. As Chief Minister I will always put our children first. I have championed reform of government, of this Assembly, of public services and in ways of working. I know I have not always been successful and reform of our services has been slower than I wanted but I persevered and I am optimistic about the opportunities for a new partnership right across the Assembly, to make the difference we all came into public life to achieve. A genuine partnership between Ministers, Scrutiny and all States Members can create the long-term policies to deliver lasting improvements to Islanders' lives. With a balanced team of both new and experienced Ministers that I will propose I know that we have the political talent and expertise to deal successfully with the economic, social and international challenges our Island faces. My proposals for change have established the basis for modern government in Jersey. I appointed a new Chief Executive with the experience and determination to deliver the operational reforms we need to our public services. For the first time in my 6 years as Chief Minister I genuinely believe that we now have the governance, structure and senior capability to make the changes happen, for which I have striven for so long. Modernising government and delivering the reform that Islanders demand is within our grasp but this change is not guaranteed. It needs experience and committed leadership to guide it from a Chief Minister who has a clear purpose and who will make the difficult decisions when called upon to do so. I have that experience, honed from 6 difficult years in this job. I ask Members to support me today as your Chief Minister to continue the reforms I started. Together we can make the lasting changes that will safeguard the future of this great Island of ours. Thank you very much.

### **The Bailiff:**

There is an hour of questions. As on the previous occasion, there will be no supplementaries for as long as Members who have not asked questions wish to do so. I call first on Senator Mézec.

### **2.2.1 Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

Once again on behalf of Reform Jersey, I would like to congratulate Senator Gorst on his re-election as Senator. In the last term Senator Gorst was instrumental for orchestrating £10 million of cuts to the Social Security budget which affected some of the poorest people in Jersey, including disabled people, single parent families and pensioners. He then voted against a proposition brought by what I think was an excellent Scrutiny Panel involving Deputies Southern, Tadier, Renouf and McDonald showing that the decision made to reduce the single parent component was wrong and was causing hardship for people. How can we have faith that if he is returned as Chief Minister that Senator Gorst will not attempt to do similar things again affecting the poor and vulnerable in Jersey? What assurances can he give us that in actual fact we should be making efforts to eliminate poverty on this wealthy Island?

### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

Yes, the Council of Ministers did find itself in a position of needing to balance budgets at the start of the term of the last government and it did so by making savings and reductions in various parts of its budget so that it could reinvest in health and education. We made no bones about that. The Social Security income support budget at that time was around £80 million. Every Minister came forward with changes and reprioritisations to their budget in order to present a balanced budget and in order to invest what will be £40 million extra per year in health by 2019 and to the order of, I think it is, £9 million in education over the same period. Income support is a contract between those who need support and taxpayers who provide that support. We have seen, under the stewardship of the last Minister for Social Security, the budget going down even further on top of the changes that were brought forward because they are investing tens of millions of pounds into getting individuals and families into work. A programme which I started when I was the Minister for Social Security. Yet in October of last year we started to see again rises in the component of income support. So the reason that we did not, and I did not, support the Scrutiny Panel to reintroduce the single parent component is as I explained during that debate. That was a debate that was brought forward post the Care Inquiry and that was quite clear that any money that we had should be absolutely focused on children, and that is what the Minister was proposing, that is what I stood in this Assembly and said I thought was a better proposal was to take that same amount of money and spread it and give it to all families with children because, if we look at the income distribution report, we see it is children right across the family spectrum, whether there is one parent or 2 parents, that need that support.

#### **The Bailiff:**

Senator, for your information we have 17 different Members wishing to ask questions of you so it is important that the answers stay as concise as possible, and also the questions.

#### **2.2.2 Deputy S.M. Wickenden:**

I will start by congratulating the candidate on his re-election to the Senatorial benches. I am going to stick with asking the same question to both candidates so it is fair on the answers. With digital being such a vital sector of our growing economy, would the candidate please inform the Assembly what plans he has to supporting the digital economy and the government digital transformation programme, and who he has in mind to oversee this important role?

#### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

Let me start by saying that Digital Jersey was introduced by the Government that I was leading at the time and has ever proved to be a good investment because for the first time we have the potential for diversification through the digital sector. Not only that, we know that digital is transforming the way the other sectors in our economy work. I have supported Digital Jersey, I have supported their training schemes and their education schemes and there we see members of our community who have decided that they want to make themselves fit for this digital transformation that is happening right across our community. I am proposing a digital academy, I am proposing working with Digital Jersey to increase their budget where necessary and I think that my record shows that I will deliver on those proposals. The Deputy knows - and I congratulate him on his return to office - that I have asked him if I am successful to come back to my department and continue the good work that he has been doing around digital transformation. I can pick out individuals all morning long - you are going to say I will be speaking for too long - but I am absolutely standing and absolutely clear in my submission and in what I have said that the entire system has to change so that we can use the skills of all Members who not only like Deputy Wickenden, but I know the Deputy of St. Peter as well, has great experience in the digital sector. We should not be hamstrung by the system that we have that means some people are not used and involved, we do not get to benefit from their passion and their experience. It is that system that needs to change so that we can harness all of the talents.

#### **2.2.3 Deputy J.H. Young:**

In congratulating the Senator for his return in the election to these benches I would like to ask him, does he agree that in the last 6 years Jersey has changed? We have seen increasing income inequality, housing has become unavailable and unaffordable, population has increased out of control, policies introduced affect the most vulnerable people, and our health and education services are under severe pressure. What can he say that if I vote for him that things are going to be different in the next 3 years?

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

We know that the Income Distribution Survey was clear in that it said that income inequality had increased over the last 5 years but had remained static over the last 10 years, so had not increased. What did that report say? It said at the heart of that increase in income inequality was the cost of housing. The reason that it showed that there had been that increase was because those in the rental sector had been suffering stress. Those who were owner/occupied, the report was quite clear about this, said that they had benefited from low interest rates but those in the rental sector obviously had not benefited from those low interest rates and therefore inflation was meaning that we had this income inequality increase. That is absolutely what I proposed during the election and I stand on a platform today that says if you vote for me today - and I know the questioner signed my fellow candidate's nomination paper - within 6 weeks I will create an Affordable Housing Commission, because it is all about the cost of housing. That housing commission will focus on driving down the cost of housing and increasing the supply. I spoke in the election about also including in that commission the remit of the 90 per cent rent rate in the social housing sector. I will ask them to bring forward their proposals by the end of this year so that this Assembly can make decisions and get to grips with the housing crisis in our community once and for all. There is no easy answer but by coming together as a community I think that we can tackle some of these really difficult issues.

[11:15]

He talked about health. As I said, we will have put an extra £40 million into health by the end of 2019. Will we need to do more? Yes, we will but it will need to be paid for.

**2.2.4 Deputy M. Tadier:**

It sounds to me like the Chief Minister is saying: "I may have been a leopard for the last 12 years but if you vote for me now I will change my spots in the next 4 years." Is it not the case that in Jersey we currently have 44 per cent of single parent families living in relative poverty and we have 23 per cent of households with children who have gone without new clothing and a third of households have difficulty saving £10 a month for emergencies. All this under his watch: 3 years at Social Security and 6½ as Chief Minister. So despite the fact that he stood on a platform of wanting to get rid of poverty, poverty has got worse. Does the Chief Minister acknowledge first of all that his tenure as Chief Minister has been one of failure? Failure to get rid of poverty or to improve poverty, failure to implement electoral reform, failure to deliver the strategic priority of improving the lives of people in St. Helier, failure to deliver on a new hospital in a timely and affordable way, and failing many hardworking public-sector workers by engaging promptly in the negotiations in a courtesy and effective way with them, to mention just few of his failures. Does he acknowledge these failures? Will he apologise for them? What faith can we have that he will change in a meaningful way in the next 4 years?

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

New Members will be starting to realise that there is a lot of political cut and thrust across the floor of this Assembly, and words like failure are easily suggested. I could equally read out - I am not sure you are going to let me do it unless someone asks me - a long list of successes. We are on a journey. He mentions again income inequality, I have already addressed that issue and how at its heart is the housing issue and there are no easy platitudes that can address that but we will need greater supply.

He talks about St. Helier and he is right that some of the individual organisations like S.o.J.D.C., like Andium, have supported the work of St. Helier and the transformation of St. Helier but now is a time for change. I believe - and I supported the Constable in this regard before - that St. Helier should become masters of its own destiny and that functions and responsibilities should move from D.f.I. (Department for Infrastructure) to St. Helier, that there should be - and I am proposing - the creation of a Minister for St. Helier. During the election I said that the dividend from the sale of the first building of S.o.J.D.C. should be directly reinvested back into St. Helier to improve the urban environment. Of course I have been in this job for 6 years; have I got everything right? No, I have not and I said in my opening remarks that I absolutely admit that but I believe that the change that I have started to deliver cannot be taken for granted and needs vision and experience and a new way of working in order to deliver it. That is what I am committing to to Members of this Assembly today.

### **2.2.5 Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

I am going to ask the candidate the same question I asked the previous candidate but I hope he will be more open than the other candidate who did not mention some of the other deals that he had done. Would the Chief Minister advise the Assembly who he has done deals with to become Ministers or take positions in the future States if he is the Chief Minister?

### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

This is an election about who this Assembly want to lead them - politically that is - through the challenges that we face. I am making my case for why I believe that my skills, my experience, my vision is the right one for Jersey and for Islanders today. At the heart of his question is a question that many Members have been asking me over the last number of days. I have to say that from a personal perspective it has been difficult because people have been coming to see me and lobbying for particular individuals, those who have asked I have been clear with, so I have no problem. This will lose me some votes by saying it but I have to be true to myself. The team that I would currently be proposing are at Treasury, Senator Le Fondré; at External Relations, the Deputy of Grouville; at Health, Deputy Pinel; at Environment, the Deputy of St. Martin; at Home Affairs, Senator Moore; at E.D.D. (Economic Development Department), Senator Farnham; at Housing, Senator Mézec; at Education, Senator Vallois. I would also be asking Senator Pallett to become my Assistant Chief Minister. Members will note that there are 2 portfolios there, which I cannot give absolute assurance on because I have been lobbied extremely hard over the course of the last weekend. I did have a preferred candidate for Social Security but many Members from right across this Assembly have suggested to me that I should propose another. My preferred candidate was the Deputy of St. Ouen, the other candidate that Members have been proposing to me is Deputy Martin. I have said to Members over the course of yesterday that I would be prepared to consider and nominate Deputy Martin. I have not had time to speak with her and talk about the challenges of that department and yet, at the same time, I think there are some exciting pilots and creative programmes that we can employ to help the most vulnerable families in our community. The final one, of course, is the Department for Infrastructure and I think it is fair to say that any Member that I have spoken to about that particular department is not very keen on it. **[Laughter]** Those 2 are decisions that I cannot give firm answers to Members on today. I have not done deals with these individuals. For me, putting together a team is about putting together the right team for Jersey. It is not about putting together a team so that one can get through the election today. It is about putting together a team that is right for Jersey. I am in absolutely no doubt that the challenges that we face here on Island and internationally mean that we have to have the very best team that we can looking after our small country. That is another reason why I am proposing the reforms to the system because we cannot just have these 10 people with the Chief Minister. The entire system, as I asked the States to do prior to the election, needs to be reformed and that will be one of my priorities, to create more ministries,



to work better with Scrutiny, changing the way that Scrutiny works and functions, so that we can have a Government of all the talents.

### **2.2.6 Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

In the previous Assembly I was a member of Scrutiny and we were charged with reviewing a wholly-owned States entity. We requested on numerous occasions information from this entity. I will not mention which one it is and it was refused over a period of, I think, about 10 months. We had to go to the ludicrous extent of taking out a subpoena on this wholly-owned States entity, which declined to give us information; a complete contradiction to the proposition that set it up. If re-elected, what steps would the candidate take to make sure this ludicrous situation does not repeat itself?

### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

I do not want to go over all of the history of that particular report, the reasons for that report. But the Deputy will know that it was not my department, however, officials from my department very strongly supported the Scrutiny Panel in endeavouring to find a way through the difficulties that they encountered about commercial confidentiality. That is very important when we have arms-length bodies who operate in the commercial world, that there is appropriate commercial confidentiality there. Otherwise, as the old saying used to be, people will see the States coming and when they do that they will charge and adjust their prices accordingly. I think my record in that regard is good; we supported the Scrutiny Panel. I think that the processes and the procedures now in place mean that that will not happen again.

### **2.2.7 Senator S.W. Pallett:**

Is it the candidate's intention to personally lead Brexit negotiations and discussions in Whitehall and Brussels to secure the Island's best interests? If so, how does he see the role of the Minister for External Relations moving forward?

### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

Sir, may I just have a drink of water? Hopefully, that does not mean that my answer is going to be exceptionally long. This is a good question but a difficult question for me because Members, when I have been speaking to them about the role and job of Chief Minister, have largely been saying ... and I think they started at the St. Peter's hustings, if I recall correctly: "We do not want Senator Gorst to carry on being Chief Minister but, my goodness me, we do want him to be doing what we think is the most difficult and the most important issue facing our Island." I understand that point of view because I absolutely am standing here today because I have the experience, I have the relationships in Westminster, in Whitehall, in Brussels, with my colleague Chief Ministers in Guernsey and the Isle of Man and the Crown Dependencies and the First Ministers of Scotland, of Wales and the not quite First Minister of Northern Ireland, the Taoiseach of Ireland. That job is a chief ministerial job and it surprises me that someone putting themselves forward to do this job would want or expect to delegate it to another. On a daily basis, or virtually daily, officials come into ask me for my opinion on particular issues; that is how it should be. Those relationships will, ultimately, be absolutely crucial in us getting a good Brexit. If Members wish to put those to one side, that is entirely up to them but my basis for standing is, I think, that is a risk too far. I can now pick up the telephone to the Secretary of State in various departments; I know them but they expect to deal with the Chief Minister. We can navigate this greatest challenge we face well but it is by no means certain.

[11:30]

If today we decide to start again on those relationships, then I believe we increase the risk of navigating that well.

### **2.2.8 Senator L.J. Farnham:**

The new chief executive officer of the States presented a new structure for the public sector, which does not quite align with the current ministerial offices. How will Senator Gorst deal with that moving forward? Does he see perhaps we would structure the new ministerial team in line with those departments or will he put together a team and ask the public sector to build a structure around that?

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

I was asked earlier about failures and one Member seemed to drum up a long list of them. For my part, one of my great disappointments is the length of time it has taken to really start to get to grips with reform of the public sector. Those Members who sat in this place before will know that for me the publication of the Care Inquiry report was quite literally a life-changing event. Because we had seen in other reports, but we saw so clearly in that report, that the structure of our service was failing the most vulnerable. I am grateful to those Members who supported me in the recruitment of the new Chief Executive Officer. The changes that he and I have been discussing about reducing departments, driving out duplication and removing the silo working that we had previously are really important changes. But I am not going to presume to tell Members of this Assembly exactly what Ministers will sit where and what their functions will be. I have some ideas, as I have already said publicly, about a new Minister for Children. This new structure allows us for the first time to have a Minister for Children, a Minister for Consumer Affairs but there are many others; a Minister for Equality, a changing to the way that we do Deputy Chief Minister functions as well. But one of the first things that I will do is bring together a group of Members made up of Executive and non-Executive and Back-Bench Members to agree how we are going to function in that structure because, yes, it is important that there are changes to the ministerial system. I think we are all frustrated by it and I know, like me, that during the election Members will have heard members of the public telling them just how clearly and how much they were frustrated by it and they felt like banging a few heads together, so that we work together. We got rid of personality politics and we made decisions and we focused on them; that is why the structural changes that I admit, perhaps, I was too robust in how I asked the States to agree those at the end of the last Assembly. But my goodness me, they are now the changes that are going to deliver the transformation that every Member in this Assembly wants to see. It will not be for me, with respect to the Senator, to decide that. This is another of those areas where we have to change our operating model and we have to work together. Because I know, speaking to Members through the course of the last number of weeks, that lots of Members have got lots of really good ideas about particular cross-cutting Ministers and how Scrutiny might work into the future. I want to harness that for the benefit of Islanders; a Government of all the talent, not just the few.

**2.2.9 Deputy R. Ward:**

I would like to ask this candidate how he sees the relative influence of the Assembly, his Chief Minister and Scrutiny over his possible future reshuffles and a loss and creation of ministerial roles, as a proportion would be good.

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

Sorry, could I just ask the questioner to clarify his final point, as a proportion of ...

**Deputy R. Ward:**

In terms of the relative influence of those 3 areas; the Assembly, the Chief Officer and Scrutiny.

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

The Assembly have approved changes to the law to allow, after 6 months, the Chief Minister to change portfolios and to reshuffle and that was the change that the Assembly approved. We sometimes get the impression, from reading the media, that the chief ministerial position is all powerful. I can tell you, from sitting in this chair, that is not the case. It is about building consensus,

it is about bringing changes, about bringing legislation and getting approval in this Assembly. One cannot achieve any of one's changes without a majority of support in this Assembly. It is not about strength of position, it is about building agreement and building consensus. How do we know that that is so important? Because his colleague to his right - I never thought I would say that - talked about a failure of electoral reform. Electoral reform has failed because we have not been able to build consensus in this Assembly. Lots of individuals have had lots of jolly good ideas but when it has come down to it we have not been able to build consensus. This job is just about that and, therefore, moving the portfolios and changing roles, once in the job of Chief Minister, can only do that with the majority of the support of this Assembly and the majority of the support of Ministers. But I would say, if the Assembly elects me today, I will only make those changes as part of a clear vision for how they fit together and how they are going to improve Islanders' lives.

**2.2.10 Senator K.L. Moore:**

What are the candidate's views on removing G.S.T. from food? If he would retain it, what other measures would he propose to reduce the cost of living?

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

This is an issue that I think I am aligned with my fellow candidate on. I have blown, perhaps in the past, hot and cold when we originally introduced G.S.T. I wanted it to be low and broad and simple. When we changed or increased the rate from 3 per cent to 5 per cent I was concerned about the effect on the most vulnerable. If my memory serves, at that point I think I voted to make changes and exemptions. But since then I have seen how, in this particular case, the retail market works. We could take G.S.T. off food but we would be very hard pressed to develop a straightforward system that did not need to keep you in the other place hour after hour considering detailed technical cases about Jaffa Cakes and such like, to mirror the law in the U.K. But my greater concern is that we would take off 5 per cent today and in 2 weeks' time prices would go up for some other reason. But the cost of living is a really important issue, and it is one that I spoke a lot about during the course of the election. I was quite clear, I think the Competition Regulator - and I am mindful I have to be careful here - has, to some extent, lost its way and needs to be absolutely focused on driving down the cost of living and they need to do that with the Consumer Association. I have said I will bring forward changes to the Competition Regulator's governing regulations. I will propose to bring them together in the same department that deals with consumer matters and ensure that they are entirely focused on those cost of living issues, which are important to Islanders and also create a Minister for Consumer Affairs.

**2.2.11 The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Developing on from the previous question, what are the candidate's views on G.S.T. on care costs?

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

It is an issue that I undertook in response to a constituent to review. I have passed that to the Treasury Department and I expect them to carry out that particular review.

**2.2.12 The Connétable of St. Helier:**

Does the candidate regard as one of his successes the innovative marketing campaign by Visit Jersey, rising numbers of holidaymakers, cheap flights? Will he confirm his commitment to our tourism industry and pledge to address the particular challenges it faces in staff recruitment and retention?

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

Yes and yes. Had Members been asking me about achievements, these are team achievements. The work of Visit Jersey is fantastic. For the first time we have core data about the tourists that are coming here, where they are coming from, why they have decided to come here and what would

make them return to Jersey. It is a fantastic improvement. But my goodness me, you would not have expected that the Chief Minister had to get involved in order to move a few people out of States employ into an arms-length organisation but I did and without that involvement we would not have Visit Jersey today. I am extremely grateful for the support of Senator Farnham and for those businessmen from the private sector who helped drive it forward as well. Of course, having married into a family who was/is in the hospitality business, I remember when that industry was not well loved, when we had what were referred to as horror cars on the road when it was dominant. We just need to be careful about thinking everything in the past is rosy. But I absolutely support them. I want to work collaboratively with them around their staff needs. I know they are concerned about the time-limited work permits and how that will operate. There is an opportunity over the coming short months to work with them to ensure that we have a process that provides mitigation to the long-term detrimental impact of population growth and yet, at the same time, provides them with the staff that they need. If they are investing in those staff, which I know that they want to, then we need to be very careful about the type of permits that we give to them.

**The Bailiff:**

Senator, we have 11 questioners for you and about 20 minutes left. Deputy Ash.

[11:45]

**2.2.13 Deputy L.B. Ash of St. Clement:**

At the last election we saw a vote for change, we saw a Reform candidate Senator for the first time, we saw 2 women top the poll for the first time, we saw someone elected with a witty slogan for the first time. As part of that, we also saw the then Chief Minister drop from first in the poll to sixth. Does he feel that he has lost the confidence of the electorate?

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

I congratulate the Deputy on his witty slogan. He was far more creative than I was in my slogan. I am not sure that such witticism would go with Gorst, unfortunately. As I have said, I am not going to stand for re-election, so I do not need to worry about that into the future either. It is no surprise that having been in this role for 6 years, particularly post the financial crisis, and steered our Island through some of the most difficult economic situations that we have encountered and some difficult social revelations, having to make difficult and unpopular decisions, that I would not have received the same amount of votes that I did during the last election. This election today, he is absolutely right, is about change but I ask Members and I ask him to think about the change he wants. Does he want a changed face at the top or does he want the fundamental change that I am talking about, change to housing provision, change to mental health provision reducing waiting lists, change to the long-term care scheme, change to the social provision right across our community, change to the way that we do government in this place and change to the public service, driving out inefficiencies, driving out silos? I started that change, so he can challenge me for being a bit slow; I accept that challenge. I have started that change. It is not guaranteed or he can vote for change for a different person here, put that change on hold and not guarantee it and also increase the risks that we face.

**2.2.14 The Connétable of Grouville:**

I would like the Senator to tell us what he has done for agriculture in the last 6 years and how he will support it, if he is successful, in the next 4.

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

He knows that I have worked with the Minister for Economic Development to protect the budget for agriculture during the M.T.F.P. (Medium Term Financial Plan) period last time. I have supported Jersey Dairy around the globe promoting them. In fact I was present when they signed a deal with a

large Chinese importer and I have met with them frequently. During the agricultural hustings I talked about the issues that the agricultural industry is having with recruiting staff and also the increases in the minimum wage, which I support. I said then that I would work and ensure that any incoming Minister for Social Security looked to give social security reductions to the agricultural sector to help mitigate some of the effects of the increase in the minimum wage because labour is absolutely critical. I also will work with the incoming Minister for Home Affairs around the work permits outside of Europe that I know is also critical for the agricultural sector into the future.

### **2.2.15 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Yes, we have heard lots of nice rhetoric but how about the ‘how will you do’ question? How will the candidate pay for the inevitable increases in services to our ageing population required over the next 4 years? What changes, if any, does he envisage to social security contributions?

### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

The Deputy knows that the Social Security Department is in the middle of a major review of the social security contributions, payments and fund. I also know that the Deputy is a member of a party that made 10 pledges and talked about increasing social security contributions. It was not clear from that pledge whether that was to mitigate the amount of money that taxpayers put into that fund or it was to provide extra benefits to contributors. I am absolutely clear, as the previous Minister for Social Security was clear, that there will, over time, need to be increases in social security contributions. But let us remember, in the Social Security Reserve Fund there is nearly £2 billion. In the Health Insurance Fund there is over £80 million. Those funds are going to help smooth the ageing population as we go forward; that is what we have built them up for, that is what they are there for, to cushion the older members of our community as we see more of them in the coming decades. But will they need to increase over time? Of course they will but this is a long-term scheme. It is about our future, as an Island, and we do not make rushed or knee-jerk decisions about social security. We consult, we make changes carefully, so that there are not unintended consequences. But the Social Security Fund is one of those policy areas that we should be absolutely proud of. We are one of the few places in the world that have such reserves to help us deal with the ageing demographic.

### **2.2.16 The Connétable of St. Ouen:**

May I firstly congratulate my fellow parishioner when he was re-elected as Senator? My question is this: in the candidate’s statement he says that he will lift the standards of living for families on lower incomes by increases in the minimum wage and increases in the level of pensions and benefits. My fear is this cost will simply be passed on by a number of employers, particularly those in the agricultural, hospitality and retail sector by way of price increases, which will, once again, add to the Jersey cost of living. This, in turn, will hit those who have already suffered post-Zero/Ten, namely those in the middle and lower-income groups. Would the candidate give me an assurance that he will re-look at the balance of taxation between private individuals and companies, particularly those who are exempt from income tax and G.S.T., which may provide a better solution to this issue?

### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

I think I have addressed the question when it comes to agriculture and the proposals that I am making now. I was absolutely delighted during the course of the election or just at the start of the election to see one of our great hospitality names saying that they were going to pay the living wage, so not the minimum wage but the living wage going forward. There are some sectors of that industry that can pay the living wage. But this is why, although I am a supporter of increasing the minimum wage, I could not give the commitment to Reform Jersey that I would agree to £10 an hour by 2020 because of the unintended consequences and the need to work with those sectors where cost margins are narrow and yet, at the same time, where staff needs are great. I do support the living wage on a

voluntary basis; that is why I committed the States to paying the living wage and that is why I have committed the States to seeking that living wage accreditation. I talked about pensions; we should be proud of the social security contributions and of the fund and how it operates pensions on an annual basis. We also put money into budgets for income support. Some of the criticisms earlier were about freezing components of income support but the previous Minister increased the components of income support in October, I think it was, of last year. It is a balance between looking at cost of living and paying good, decent wages and that is a balance that this Assembly has to make decisions on every year when it is asked to consider the minimum wage, when it brings forward changes to regulation on any particular sector. There is an effect and this Assembly has to balance that positive effect of protection and regulation with the potential negative effect of increases in cost and whether that is just passed on to everyday Islanders or the businesses can deal with it. We have to take each of those on a case-by-case basis and make the judgments about where the decision should lie.

### **2.2.17 The Connétable of St. John:**

On 9th April we had a debate, P.37, that I proposed and that was to have a quick review of the hospital sites, which was opposed by the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers. The Chief Minister at the time spoke against it and, unfortunately, most of the Ministers were outside the Chamber. Following a radio interview last Thursday, Senator Gorst said he would support a review into the position of the hospital in line with P.37. Can I ask the candidate how he can convince me to support him when a leader is out of touch with public opinion and who changes his mind?

### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

I was quite clear during the election that I thought that any incoming new Minister for Health would wish to seek endorsement of this Assembly for the current site; that is not changing my mind, that is living with the practicalities of an election and a new Assembly. As I have spoken to Members, and as I went through that election, it became clear to me that the next Council of Ministers and the Assembly would want to give further consideration to this issue of a review. I asked officials to draw up a term of reference for a short review and also to get costings for a short review. If that is changing my mind, then I stand accused of changing my mind. But I think the Constable knows that the majority of Members that I have spoken to, today in this new Assembly, would like some sort of work like that to be done; not all. I have spoken to some who see the hospital as it is, not fit for purpose, causing people issues, who want us very much to get on with it and it is interesting that that view comes from people who are encountering the hospital week in, week out. I am absolutely committed to delivering a new hospital but I want us to get a decision, I want us to get a decision quickly and I think that a very short review, while the funding application is being considered, will allow us to make a much more informed decision when the incoming Minister for Health seeks that endorsement.

### **2.2.18 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Could the Senator tell me about how he would propose to address education funding, which was something we disagreed about in the last term? Would he increase education funding in real terms, as set out in the Scrutiny Panel report? Also, would he increase funding for early years' provision, including possible subsidies for high quality childcare and where would he get that money from?

[12:00]

### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

Sir, it is a good but quite technical question and I am mindful that you tried to stop me on a number of occasions from talking too much. The previous M.T.F.P. transferred money, made some savings in the ... sorry, I should say that is the Medium Term Financial Plan, which is the planning framework

for another 4 years, made some changes and reductions in some areas of the education budget in order to reprioritise it. Of course, on top of that was demographic changes and extra money was put into deal with that. I have been absolutely clear during the course of this election that more money will be required in education. We are not meeting the standards that we should and that we should aspire to for our children. Teachers are struggling under the processes that we are asking them, in order to try and deliver standards. I have got nothing but respect for our teachers. I think, as I have said on a number of occasions here, my children go to the Parish school and the teachers there are absolutely first class. But they are working every hour God sends and we will receive emails from them and answers to questions from them and that, I think, is the strain and the pressure that we need to deal with; that may be about class sizes, may be about workload, it is any number of things. But it is exactly the area that I would be expecting the new Minister for Education to be considering, about how we can work better, what money is required during the period of the next 4 years and beyond? One of the reasons I am absolutely passionate about the changes to government is because by driving out the silos, by reducing the number of departments and inefficiencies; that is going to release money for front line services. If we do not make that change those front line services will carry on needing money but we are going to then have to go back to the public and ask them for more money. I do not think that is the right approach. I think the right approach is drive out the inefficiencies, drive out the duplication and reprioritise that money to front line services.

#### **2.2.19 The Deputy of St. Martin:**

In his opening remarks the Senator referenced farming and fishing, and I am grateful for that. But in his statement there is disappointingly little about air, water, soil, countryside access, sustainable energy, *et cetera*. However, in order to be forgiven, would he commit to greater expenditure on all matters environmental in the next session of Government? To save time, I am happy to take a one-word answer.

#### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

Tempting as it is, Sir, how long have I got left?

#### **The Bailiff:**

About a minute and a half.

#### **Senator I.J. Gorst:**

Okay. The answer, in short, is, yes, that is why I put it in my election manifesto, that I believe in a green Jersey and we need to do much more. He, as the Minister for the Environment, has not had the money that he has needed to deliver on green projects. It is about green infrastructure, it is about green energy and I think that he will find, should he be elected to that position again, he has the Assembly right behind him. The Deputy of Grouville is passionate about these issues. She was, as the questioner knows, on his case about feed-in tariffs. All of that work with all providers of energy needs to be undertaken because we are a small country. If it can be got right anywhere, it can be got right here. But it is going to take some courage, it is going to take some changing on how we view these arms-length companies, not just about dividend but for the common good and it is probably going to take some investment as well.

#### **The Bailiff:**

Deputy Pamplin, you have not got time for an answer but do ask your question, if you would like to.

#### **2.2.20 Deputy K. Pamplin:**

I will be brief then, thank you, Sir. Does the candidate wish to see this Assembly debate in the assisted-dying debate, which is very passionate by the public at the moment and sees an opportunity for us to improve pathways to care using the charity sector?

**The Bailiff:**

Thank you very much indeed ...

**Deputy J.H. Perchard:**

Point of order, Sir. Please forgive me if I have misunderstood something but my understanding was there were 70 questions and 49 Members and that each would be enabled to ask a question before supplementary questions are taken. I am yet to ask my question, Sir.

**The Bailiff:**

You are indeed, as are 3 other Members. An hour has been allowed for questions and, unfortunately, that hour has been taken up. Usher, would you please invite Senator Le Fondré to come back to the Chamber? I think everybody is here. Very well, the Standing Orders require that the vote as to who is to be the Chief Minister is to be taken on a recorded vote. As Senator Le Fondré's name came out of the hat first, if you wish to vote for Senator Le Fondré you should press the button that says P. If you wish to vote for Senator Gorst you should press the button which says C. I ask the Greffier to open the voting.

**MEMBERS VOTING FOR SENATOR LE FONDRÉ (30 VOTES)**

Senator S.C. Ferguson

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré

Senator S.Y. Mézec

The Connétable of St. Saviour

The Connétable of St. Brelade

The Connétable of Grouville

The Connétable of St. John

The Connétable of St. Peter

The Connétable of St. Mary

The Connétable of St. Ouen

The Connétable of St. Martin

Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier

Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier

The Deputy of Grouville

Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour

Deputy R. Labey of St. Helier

The Deputy of St. Mary

Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade

Deputy L.B.E. Ash of St. Clement



Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence  
Deputy G.C.U. Guida of St. Lawrence  
The Deputy of St. Peter  
The Deputy of Trinity  
The Deputy of St. John  
Deputy S.M. Ahier of St. Helier  
Deputy J.H. Perchard of St. Saviour  
Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier  
Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier

MEMBERS VOTING FOR SENATOR GORST (19 VOTES)

Senator I.J. Gorst  
Senator L.J. Farnham  
Senator T.A. Vallois  
Senator K.L. Moore  
Senator S.W. Pallett  
The Connétable of St. Helier  
The Connétable of St. Clement  
The Connétable of St. Lawrence  
The Connétable of Trinity  
Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier  
Deputy S.J. Pinel of St. Clement  
The Deputy of St. Martin  
Deputy R.J. Rondel of St. Helier  
The Deputy of St. Ouen  
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour  
Deputy S.M. Wickenden of St. Helier  
Deputy G.J. Truscott of St. Brelade  
Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier  
Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour

**[Approbation]**

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

Can I just thank Senator Gorst for his time as Chief Minister and can I really thank everyone who did support me? Hopefully, we will all work together looking forward. Thank you very much. **[Approbation]**

**The Bailiff:**

The States now stand adjourned until 9.30 ...

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

Sir, I think as the Father of the House I need to seek the adjournment.

**The Bailiff:**

Would you like to ...

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

As I get used to my new role, I should like to thank all those Members who gave me their support today and all those Members who remain in this Assembly and those who are not who have supported me over the term of 6 years. They will never know how grateful I am to them for that support and I give my congratulations to Senator Le Fondré. Thank you, Sir. **[Approbation]**

**The Bailiff:**

Thank you, Chief Minister. Very well, the States now stand adjourned until 9.30 a.m. on Thursday morning.

**ADJOURNMENT**

[12:10]