

Deputy E.J. Noel of St. Lawrence:

If I may test the mood of the House. Senator Routier, Deputy Green and myself are to attend a funeral this morning shortly after 10.30. We have 15 oral questions and 2 hours to do so, which is ample time. I want to test the mood of the House whether or not questions 8, 10 and 15 could be taken first, Sir?

The Deputy Bailiff:

That seems sensible. Do Members agree to take questions 8, 10 and 15 on the Order Paper first? Very well, that is what we will do.

3.1 Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin of the Chief Minister regarding the reduction of the time taken by the Privy Council to approve legislation:

Given the current economic situation, will the Chief Minister undertake to make the necessary representations to request the Draft Control of Housing and Work (Jersey) Law 201- is sanctioned quickly by the Privy Council and what action, if any, is he able to take to try and reduce the time taken by the Privy Council to approve, not only this law, but others in the future.

Senator I.J. Gorst:

If I could ask my Assistant Minister with responsibility for population matters to answer this question, thank you.

Senator P.F. Routier (Assistant Chief Minister - rapporteur)

I am pleased to have the opportunity to remind Members of the anticipated timescale for this much-needed new law. Action is being undertaken in the form of contact with the Ministry of Justice to ensure that the approval of the Privy Council of the new law as soon as possible and for it to coincide with the completion of our own work, for example, around I.T. (information technology) systems and the required support legislation. This should all be in place by July of this year. In the meantime we are vigorously applying the existing laws to secure our objectives around local employment and immigration, which aim to maximise jobs for locally qualified people. With regard to progressing other laws for their approval by the Privy Council, there has been established an officer group looking at ways of streamlining the whole process.

3.1.1 Deputy J.A. Martin:

On the bigger question - and me and the rapporteur might interpret the law differently - but I still understand it that this law will not stop anybody coming into Jersey who wants to come into Jersey. Is the Chief Minister in talks with the U.K. (United Kingdom) Government to the overall, whether they are changing their stance, given their situation in the U.K. with unemployment, especially youth unemployment? Are we having any talks in the higher ranks?

The Deputy Bailiff:

Sorry, Deputy, I regard this question about the length of time to get Privy Council assent, and I do not think that question follows on from the question.

3.1.2 Deputy S. Power of St. Brelade:

Could the Assistant Chief Minister confirm that he has an assurance from the U.K. Justice Department that they will expedite this law, on the control of work and housing, because is he aware that the Residential Tenancy Law, which was passed in 2009, took over 2 years to come back from the Privy Council?

Senator P.F. Routier:

Yes, I am aware that there was some difficulty with the Residential Tenancy Law, which has now been resolved. With regard to this law, there has been communication with the Ministry of Justice and they are aware of our need to have this in place as soon as we possibly can. But, as I say, there is also still work for ourselves to do to ensure that it all coincides together with the law coming back, being sanctioned, and also the internal work that we have to do within the department.

3.1.3 Deputy J.A. Hilton of St. Helier:

Can the Assistant Minister explain what measures the department is taking while we wait for the law to come back from the Privy Council to ensure that non-qualified licences being offered to companies... the issues around the numbers are being addressed, and how often do they come up for review?

Senator P.F. Routier:

As Members will be aware, the existing legislation only requires licences to be reviewed on a 3-yearly basis but when they do come up currently we are looking at them very closely and clawing-back on any unused non-locally qualified permissions, which exist. So we are looking at them very closely to ensure that we do tighten-up on the way non-locally qualified licences are currently in existence.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Deputy Martin is entirely right to send me a look. You should not have been allowed that question. The question is about ...

Deputy J.A. Martin:

Sorry, Sir, thank you very much for that.