

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY J.A. HILTON OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 17th JANUARY 2017**

Question

Further to his answer during questions without notice on 12th December 2016 about proposals for an effective population policy and the indication that he would announce a package of measures to strengthen the existing work of the Housing and Work Advisory Group at the beginning of January 2017, will the Chief Minister confirm exactly what these measures are and when they will be implemented?

Answer

The Housing and Work Advisory Group has just announced a new initiative to remove permissions from larger businesses – as a guide those who employ 30 members of staff or more - who hold more registered permissions than comparable businesses in their sector.

The aim is to support a fairer allocation of permissions and to limit migration in line with our economic and social priorities.

This will involve careful evaluation of up to 100 businesses, which could result in them being either being placed into a “step down” programme to gradually reduce the number of registered permissions they hold, or a work permit type condition requiring them to seek permission for each new registered member of staff they wish to employ. This initiative may be extended in due course to encompass a greater number of businesses.

All this will be undertaken *in addition* to ongoing work to remove permissions and ongoing firmness in the consideration of applications (the 2017 application statistics to be finalised and published before the end of January).

In addition, the Council of Ministers are also considering or advancing other measures, including:

1. Reviewing the fee structure under the Law, including to enhance migration controls and to invest in necessary skills, to be implemented in 2017.
2. Enhanced compliance functions as part of the continuing integration of the Population Office into the Social Security Department, to be implemented in 2017.
3. Establishing a robust system of criminal record checks for new migrants as government becomes increasingly digital, with implementation subject to findings of the work, including evaluating access to records held in different jurisdictions
4. The development of the e-census, which is being established by the Statistics Unit with a due date to be confirmed subject to further evaluation but to be before the next expected census in 2021.
5. Economic analysis of the long-term economic and fiscal implications of different levels of inward migration to support decision and policy making, which will be overseen in the first half of 2017 by the Economics Unit; and
6. The development of a long term plan, inclusive of a population policy, to set a long term direction for Jersey, with the aim of it being finalised before the Summer Recess 2017.

These initiatives need to be progressed sensitively and carefully, considering the needs of businesses and our economy, while seeking to limit migration.