

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY  
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 23RD MAY 2017**

**Question**

Will the Minister inform members whether the report ‘Living Longer: Thinking Ahead’ was produced internally and state to what extent, if any, advice was sought from either the Statistics Unit or other external advisors on the neutrality of the questions and on the interpretation of the results of the survey on which the report was based?

**Answer**

Living Longer: Thinking Ahead consultation

In October 2016, the Minister for Social Security launched the first part of a major review into income in retirement and the Social Security scheme.

“Living Longer: Thinking Ahead” asks for public feedback on the issues of income in retirement and the Social Security Scheme. It marked the start of a public conversation that will help to set the direction of Jersey’s Social Security scheme and how people save for retirement for the next thirty years.

Income in retirement

People are generally living longer and healthier lives, and many more people enjoy active lives into their 80s and 90s. However, this raises the challenge of making sure that we will have enough income and savings to look after ourselves after we have stopped working.

The review looks to understand the public’s views on living longer and having a longer retirement so that the government can play the right role in helping people to save for their retirement in the future.

The Social Security scheme

Alongside this, the review will consider the role of the Social Security pension and how the Social Security scheme could be adapted to people living longer.

Over the next 20 years, the number of people over 65 will double while the number of people under 65 will stay roughly the same. This will mean that the number of working age people supporting each pensioner will fall and, without any changes, the cost of pensions will outstrip the value of contributions. Most other developed countries are also facing this challenge now.

The Social Security scheme is based on a ‘pay as you go’ principle, which means that a person’s contributions are not saved in their own pension pot. Instead they are used to pay out the Scheme’s benefits, which is mostly the Social Security pension. Each generation relies on the next to pay for their Social Security pension.

The Scheme’s other contributory benefits protect people when they are less likely to be able to earn a living. For example, the scheme pays benefits to new mothers and to people when they are ill or disabled, and after the death of their partner. The Scheme does not pay for Income Support which tops up the income of households with low incomes who meet the appropriate work requirements and have lived in Jersey for at least five years.

### Consultation approach

The questionnaire aimed to explore in more detail the answers from the pension section of the 2015 Jersey Annual Social Survey, and people's understanding and views about how the government could adapt the Social Security Scheme to living longer during the 2020s.

The questionnaire included multiple choice questions and opportunities for free-text answers which gave people the opportunity to reply in their own words, and provided more information about the views and ideas of those who took part. Workshops were also held with interested members of the public and representatives from interest groups and the business community.

The consultation information and questions were produced by Social Security officers and tested with some members of the public before they were finalised. The approach taken in the questionnaire was discussed with the Statistics Unit. The design and printing of the consultation was carried out externally.

1,300 people responded to the questionnaire and Social Security officers held 13 workshops that were well attended by the public and representatives of interest groups and the business community. The views and ideas of the people who took part will be taken into account in the next stage of the review.

The Minister published a summary report, and a more detailed report, of the responses, comments and ideas on 15 May 2017 on the Social Security Review webpage ([www.gov.je/socialsecurityreview](http://www.gov.je/socialsecurityreview)).

Over the next few years, the government will build on the consultation comments and ideas, looking in more detail at: contributory benefits, the contribution rules for self-employed people, how working-age incapacity is assessed, and retirement income and saving (for example, workplace pensions).