

STATES OF JERSEY

Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

Migration Policy

Witness: Mr. S. Soar, Association Manager, Jersey

Hospitality Association

Monday, 26th March 2018

Panel:

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré of St. Lawrence (Chairman)

Deputy S.M. Brée of St. Clement (Vice-Chairman)

Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour

Senator S.C. Ferguson

Witness:

Mr. S. Soar, Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association

[15:43]

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré of St. Lawrence (Chairman):

What we do is we will start the proceeding formally, then talk to you how it is going to work.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Perfect.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Welcome to the hearing from the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel on migration. This is very much a high-level hearing. It is very much dipping the toe in the water. Who we have today in front of us is Mr. Simon Soar. Are you happy to call you Simon, is that okay?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Yes, please.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

As representative of the Jersey Hospitality Association. For the record, we have previously had a hearing with the Institute of Directors, which was last week and we have had a couple of written submissions, which is purely going to formulate or assist in putting together a very short high-level paper as to what the issues are, I think, that are coming out of the migration policy. If you look at the information that is to your left, that just gives you a general indication that these things are covered by what is called parliamentary privilege, which means you are free to say what you wish. For our purposes, we record the transcript and you will get a copy of that, so you can check anything in there from a factual point of view and that just means that we have got then a record down of what people have said and whether we wish to use it in terms of the report.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Perfect.

[15:45]

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

For the purposes of the transcript, my name is Deputy John Le Fondré, I am chairman of the panel.

Deputy S.M. Brée of St. Clement (Vice-Chairman):

Deputy Simon Brée, vice-chairman of the panel.

Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour:

Deputy Kevin Lewis, panel member.

Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Senator Sarah Ferguson, panel member.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

If you just say your name into the microphone.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Simon Soar.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Okay, as representative of the Jersey Hospitality Association.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Correct.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

As I said, we are not doing a major question and answer session, as we just had with the Chief Minister. What we really wanted is to allow you to talk for as long as you like almost; we are allowing about half an hour on this but just to give your take on where you think the present policy that the Chief Minister is proposing stands, what the issues are from your association's point of view and any other observations you might want to have. We will then probably come in with some questions but basically the floor is open to you.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Fantastic. Okay, I have spent quite a bit of time talking mostly with Fiona over this and some of the other members of the association. We understand the need for the migration policy. At the moment we know we need to control net migration into the Island and we have got no question with that or any qualms with that. I think our major point at the moment is understanding how these different bands are going to be brought in, where they sit in regards of the licence, who holds the licence is certainly an issue where we are quite curious about? Is it held by the individual? If so, does that mean the venues no longer need to apply to get a licence brought in for their venue to employ somebody who is non-local or do they continue with the same current practice in the person coming in also has to have a time-restricted licence with them? I understand there is a number, which whatever that number happens to be, that you are looking on net migration, how does that sit with the people, if they are going over 4 years, what opportunities do they have to allow them to breach that 4-year permit that is being put forward and become a resident in Jersey? I presume that we are not stopping complete migration into the Island but what terms are put on that? That is another big question we have regarding how this is put forward. I think there are a number of things we have seen that I do not think we have a full issue with what is being proposed at all, it is just the finer details and how that is managed. I think some of those points I have just raised there, that has got probably most of our concerns in and depending how you attack those would depend how we would question things going forward from there.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Okay, you touched on how is it managed? Do you want to expand on that?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Okay, if ...

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Work on the basis that it is probably easiest, assume we know nothing and we know something obviously but know nothing in terms of how your industry works and in terms of what that directly means for yourselves.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

If I look at what the best-case scenario here possibly would be for us would be the idea that anyone who is on a 4-year Islander permit is not counted in your net migration because they are temporary resident in the Island and only here on a medium stay and they will be leaving. If that is the case, what are we doing in regards to how these people are allowed to work in the industry, our industry in particular? If the licence is held by the individual, which, given the movement you get in hospitality, would make sense, does that then mean that venues are not restricted on how many of these people they have working for them? Currently, a venue has to apply for a licence. Currently, a venue has to be trading for 2 months before they are even allowed to sit down and apply for a licence. One of the biggest problems we are facing at the moment is trying to find local people or people who have already breached that 5-year mark to work in the industry. I have not checked this week; last week we were at 198 jobs on the gov.je page for hospitality alone, compared to 5 years ago it was about 80 in summer at its peak, so we know we are in quite a bad situation at the moment. If you allow the free movement of people to come in and work within these venues, provided they have their permit issued to them, what that would allow is we have got the seasonal workers that could provide a short-term fix, the 10-month in particular. Those who come in with a bit more of a skillset and do move around doing a couple of years in each place would be able to move and help fulfil the problem we are currently dealing with. If you are going to restrict people coming in and then still restrict what businesses can take them, we are adding another restriction in a place where we are struggling at the moment. We are seeing some really, really tough times out there at the moment. We are trying, as an association, to work on the grassroots level of how we can address this but, as you can imagine, that is not a short-term fix; this is long term we are looking at. We are looking at 5, 10, 15 years down the line and how we can bring the youth into our industry and make it a more attractive proposition. I suppose there are several issues we are looking at here; one, what is their movement and where does the licence sit? I suppose where the licence sits, the main issue with that, if the licence sits with the individual it does make things a lot easier for us. If you are doing it simultaneously with the licences sitting with the business as well, we need to understand how that is going to be managed. Is there going to be some less restrictions on that or what is going to

happen? With the current migration policy the idea was to restrict the amount of people coming into the Island by restricting how many licences were issued to the Island and stopping that net migration happening. Ideally, we want to be looking at if you are allowing people that are going to be leaving the Island, if you are setting a limit, how many are going to breach the 5-year mark? Does that mean that on the sort of 5 year, if they are leaving, we are allowed ... I do not want to say unlimited because that sounds like we are just inviting a lot of people in, we are not but would it allow less restrictions in that sense, I should say?

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

If we break it down, if the word “flexibility” is key in this lot in terms of ...

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Very much so.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

You made reference also to the ... I cannot remember if it was 9 or 10 months but I think you said 10-months’ work permit, is that quite important from the point of view of getting overseas students in, for the sake of argument, for the summer or for the summer holidays or something to allow them to come and go? Is that kind of one of the categories to fill in certain jobs or in order to make that kind of recruitment easy or what?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

No, the ten month has always been around this idea of seasonal, which I found a document of the history of the J.H.A. (Jersey Hospitality Association) the other day, which says that exactly 51 years ago 80 per cent of hotel workers were non-local, so we know we have always brought in and, predominantly, they used to be seasonal workers. They come here and do anywhere between 8 and 10 months and go off and do those other months; either go back home for a bit, they go and do maybe a ski season, something like that. There has always been this movement of people around that are happy to come and do these short periods in places because it is part of the experience, it is part to get them to see places. I have done this sort of thing myself. I think the 10-month is almost irrelevant. I think the 4 years is the interesting one here. The 10-month, we already have a seasonal licence out there and seasonal licenses are a lot easier to obtain than non-seasonal, shall we say? I am not sure about the 10-month, what you need with it. You will find a lot of people will only come here for 10 months but they might want to come for just a year. We do get quite a lot of movement to that extent. I think the key point here is they are not breaching the 5-year and I think that is pretty much what the aim of the policy is to do, if I am not mistaken.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

You talked about breaching the 4-year; is there an issue there for recruitment in all senior staff or training people up and that type of thing? Is there an issue around that?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Yes. A couple of our members have spoken about this where they say to get in ... in particular, when we are talking senior-management level, by the time you have them trained up and integrated within your venue, running it by themselves and then preparing to do the handover for the next one because they have to leave, you are only getting a couple of years of hard work out of this person where they are completely independent in what they are doing. That is a concern to a few of our guys, especially the ones that are pulling over some people with very good skills, they are doing wonders with the hotel but by the time they are starting to make a footprint, they are already having to look for the next place to go. We have to have an understanding on what opportunities we are going to have to breach that 4-year point. We are not saying we expect them to be handed out left, right and centre but we really need to understand what the process is going to be, what the criteria is going to be and to know we are going to get a fair allocation or a fair opportunity to approach that, I suppose.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Okay, just slightly bouncing around for the moment, in terms of what is being produced by the Council of Ministers and what is now being lodged as an item for the States to debate, have you been involved in the production of the documentation? Have you had much consultation in there?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

I believe my predecessor did but I do not know to what extent. I did not get much of a handover with her, I am afraid. The information I am coming here today with is stuff I have discussed with our President, Fiona. I have not been given any more information. I do not know if we have had any more interaction with the document being drawn up or the policy being drawn up.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Okay. It might be useful if you could relay that back to Simon, if there is a need to clarify. It is useful just to understand what the involvement has been. In terms of feedback from your membership, have you had any direct comments back in terms of what is being proposed at the moment?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Yes, we have had quite a lot. My concerns, and I think there are a lot of concerns about this, is you get these knee-jerk reactions of people and we have heard a lot of: "It cannot happen, it will not work, it cannot go ahead." The fact is it has to happen. We look at this and say we are in a situation we have to control net migration, there is no question about that. I think what we have to do is look

through it and understand that if this is managed properly, if we can get ... and I will keep using the word “a fair consultation” with this and a fair distribution of the licences but breach the 4-year point and an understanding of how they will work for the under 4-year point, will we be given a little bit more flexibility? I think that is quite a big thing here. With the people that are going to become permanent residents in the Island, if they are only here for a short stay the Island will not sustain more than a certain amount of them coming over anyway; we are struggling to get them over at the moment. I think if you almost did take the brake off, it is not like you are going to see plane loads of people turning up at the airport ready to work. We are struggling to get people over as it is. I have got people with licences, with accommodation, with good packages but with no staff.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

What is the issue, is it exchange rate or is it ...

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

It certainly has been seen as an effect. We have seen a decrease in the people coming from euro-based countries. Yes, that has been one effect. Difficulty in getting a job over here with the licence restrictions, people were restricted to mostly hotel work. Those granted into the restaurants or cafes, bars, they tend to have been taken by people who have already had a presence on the Island, of others with plenty of licences going are the hotels because of the way they operate. That has caused an issue, I think, and I know a number of people who have turned round. I have had people work for me and I have had friends of mine over here who have said: “It is just too difficult. I can go and get a job easier with less restrictions elsewhere.” Accommodation, I think, again, when we look at this something has to be addressed with what is defined for the accommodation side of this. If you are restricting how long people are coming over here you are changing the whole migration policy to the Island, does that change the way you view housing laws over here? Does that mean you would take away the idea of the quals and non-quals, that is the old style but that sort of split on the rental? Would you say if it is for renting purpose anyone can rent? Because I think that would make a huge difference. I have had people, again, get close to packing their bags and leaving because they cannot find accommodation or accommodation that is fit. I have seen some of the ones these people have lived in and it is not up to standard, it is nowhere near and that is a point that needs addressing. We have a fantastic Island here and we have got a great amount of services on Island. I think we should try and be pushing to give an opportunity for these venues to do the best they can for the Island and we are really trying to push back for that in our industry. Our training levels were increasing, everything is really on the push up but if we have not got the staff to develop them, we are not going to be able to keep offering those services.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Okay. One suggestion at the moment is that the policy being proposed is a kind of one size fits all. Yes, you have got the 2 different periods but it does not necessarily have the flexibility that individual industries might require. Is that a fair comment or do you think, from the point of view of hospitality, that it is stepping towards your requirements?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Yes, I think you have to look at what these businesses are looking for, what they are looking to bring in. At the end of the day, the biggest issue we have got in hospitality is that local people do not want to do the jobs that we have available. Social Security have been trying to do a scheme for a number of years with both Back to Work and Advance to Work to try and get the locals interested in. We are working very strongly with Highlands, with local schools and it is just trying to change the profile of the industry. But, again, this is not short term; it does not provide the fact that Chef de Parties, you are talking mid-level chefs, are almost non-existent on the Island. I have got one of my members been advertising for 3 months, had 2 applications; one was barely a trainee, the other one lived in Switzerland and could not speak English, neither of which she has opted to take at this stage. I am looking at that going ... I have seen the package she was offering, it was not shy. It was a decent package but she cannot fulfil the role. We know we have got to fulfil it. We know we have got to change it.

[16:00]

Yes, there is a lot of work to be done out there at the moment. We cannot employ locals because they do not want to do the jobs; we have to bring in people to do this. Most people in hospitality are happy to come and do a good few years; they do not always want to stay for a permanent period. The beauty of our industry is it is flexible enough to allow you to travel and a lot of people take full advantage of that. With regards to quality standards, improving everything from techniques to dishes to all sorts of little touches, we require people coming in and bringing their knowledge from outside, so that movement of people through the industry has always been a massive part for us. I think it is something we need to continue to encourage again and we are quite keen to do so.

Deputy S.M. Brée:

Can I just go back to a point you raised earlier on about who has the licence? From what I can gather, please correct me if I have got it wrong here, you feel that the most flexible solution would be for the individual employee to have a licence.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Yes.

Deputy S.M. Brée:

That enables them to work within a certain industry obviously or just general licence to work here for up to 4 years. Because I think reading the proposition that was lodged, you are right, it is not quite clear on how this is going to work but it sort of says: "These businesses would have confidence that employees granted a permit to work for them would remain with them, rather than switching between businesses without permission, as they do now."

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

I have a massive issue with that.

Deputy S.M. Brée:

Right, please explain.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

You are asking someone to be employed by one person, you are telling them their time on the Island is tied to being employed by one person.

Deputy S.M. Brée:

Yes.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

The opportunities for that person to ... you are tying them down, they have no freedom there. They are completely restricted. You will get the typical thing and I am not saying it would happen everywhere but there will be one or 2 people who do turn around and go: "You work for me, if you do not like it you can leave the Island." I do not see how that is fair. It allows a large amount of discrimination. Quite a few of our members have commented on that one point. Yes, we are not too keen on that point in particular.

Deputy S.M. Brée:

If you move to a situation whereby it was the employee that was granted a licence, would you not have a problem that surely that person coming into the Island for a restricted period of time is given that licence to help, say, the tourism or hospitality trade because you need extra employees coming in at different levels? If you granted that employee a licence, they could go and work anywhere. Would you support a restrictive licence? You are given a licence but you are only allowed to work in the following trades or industries.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Yes, I could support that, I could.

Deputy S.M. Brée:

Going to the business side of things, do you think that businesses should be restricted on the number of employees they can employ at any given time?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

I do not think it is necessary. In our industry, in particular, at the moment we are struggling that much. These guys cannot just turn around and say: "Let us employ another 10 people." I was chatting with one licensee just walking down here in fact and he was working a day shift in his pub because not only could he not get staff but because it is that quiet at the moment they cannot just by having another member of staff on the payroll during a quiet period. The industry is not like it was 20 years ago, it is not like it was 10 years ago. You walk out on a Tuesday, Wednesday night in town, whereas if you go back 15 years you would have had a couple of hundred people out until 2.00 in the morning. If you can find more than 50 people out and, I really mean it, if you can even find that many, I would be surprised these days. There is not the business in town during the week anymore. Where it used to be the weekends covered off the rent and all the bills, the weekdays were where you made your money, now people are just hoping they can get enough through the whole week to cover all the bills off. No, I do not think we would have an issue about saying it, have a free for all, these businesses cannot support that.

Deputy S.M. Brée:

Going back to my original question, you would support more of a move to license an individual to work in a certain trade ...

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Yes.

Deputy S.M. Brée:

... rather than restricting the number of licences or licensed people that a particular hotel or restaurant or bar could employ at any given time? Do you think that would work better on the individual than the business?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Very much so. As I said, if you get a free for all, number one, you are not going to have a boat or plane loads of people arriving on the Island suddenly. We have got jobs there that we not fulfilling at the moment and these people with licences, with opportunities, we cannot currently fulfil them. We have to do something to bring people over, even short term. Again, I have another one of my members the other day who is having to use an agency in the U.K. (United Kingdom) and is paying

an extortionate amount just to have a manager to look after her property. You think, why are we having to bring people over and I know how much she has advertised it for? That, for me, is a scary thing to see. I do not think we are going to have this sudden influx of people. I do not think we are going to have venues employing a large amount more people than they have in the past. We are not going to put any locals out of jobs. If anything, we are bringing new skills that should help the locals see the opportunities to develop even more, tied in with a lot of the work we are doing at the moment that we very much push it on that front.

Deputy S.M. Brée:

Also, it has always been a bit of a problem over here, the accommodation side of things for seasonal workers. I, myself, many, many years ago worked in the tourism industry and I know exactly the problems that people had. The only thing is if you, effectively, deregulate the rental housing market and say that anybody should be able to rent somewhere, if you have a licence to work, you are putting pressure on the local housing market much more. Is there a solution because there are local people looking for housing? If you suddenly say it is an unregulated, derestricted housing market, then you are increasing the demand on a limited housing supply. Would you have a possible solution to that?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

There are several solutions and we have talked about it round the table. It has been very lightweight, nothing too heavy pushed around this. There is the question with deregulating housing, will raise rental, no question about it. If you have a look on the pages via social media or any of the other pages that advertise housing or the rental market in particular, it is a lot easier to rent quality property than non-quality at the moment; the choice is staggering. I know that there are some people, who are coming up to the elections, asking about the idea of doing the empty property taxes, things like that. I do not think things like that are a bad idea because there are a lot of vacant properties in Jersey. Ideally, in my mind, the best opportunity we could come up with or best way forward would be to get ... they have done this with a place in Guernsey, it was an ex-hotel and they converted it into staff housing, for want of a better term and it was designed for people working over in Guernsey for a short period. They were pretty much bedsits but they were kept in good condition. They had communal kitchens on every floor. It was made to be a lot more accessible for people. It was at a decent price. There was security for the building. It was kept in a good order, which you always worry about when you have got people coming over and they are not there for a long period and it was not extortionate. Do not get me wrong, it was not cheap but it certainly was not extortionate. People felt they paid a fair price for what they had. I think we could come up with something like that; there would be massive benefits for that. It would not just be, necessarily, for people who are over here on a temporary licence. You have also got to look, there are various talks in quite a few circles at the moment of increasing opportunities for higher education in Jersey. I know the Finance

and both ourselves are talking about it. It does provide opportunities for a student base for accommodation as well. By providing accommodation at a fair rate and in good condition you encourage people to stay there. But it also means that if people are not paying ... and I know some people paying £200 a week for little more than a room, £150 to £200 a week, which is not much at all for what they are getting. They are not on the best wages in the world, which I know is an issue with some people but that is a separate topic completely. But if they had more money freed up; it is going mostly one place and one place only and that is back into the economy. Most of these guys, and they are young kids, they are under 25, they are over here, they are learning, they are improving their English, they are improving their careers, they do like to go out, they do like to enjoy themselves, they do like to be part of the community. I do not think that should be neglected, I think we can embrace it and try and push that forward; there are some ...

Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Yes, you have mentioned Guernsey and they obviously have a different approach to migration and population, is there anything that they do over there that you think we ought to have a closer look at?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

I do not know if you saw the article we put in the paper a few days ago. We use Luke Wheadon, who sits on our committee. It was about the migration policy and, in particular, it was not about the Jersey one, it was about the Guernsey one. He is Tourism and Hospitality in Chamber of Commerce in Guernsey, also has the Bella Luce Hotel. The article basically goes through the problems they face when their one was brought in and everything that has had to be changed since it has been brought in to work. Luke made it very clear, he understands the need for control of net migration and, again, we are questioning that but we understand that this has to happen. But what he said is how there has to be that fair representation, there has to be allowances for what is happening and it has to be done in a way in which ... yes, it is worth reading the article, it really is worth reading the article.

Senator S.C. Ferguson:

That was in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)*.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

It was in the *J.E.P.*, it will be on social media as well. Our Facebook pages shared the article, so it is all on there. We do try and keep people up to speed with these things. It is quite interesting.

Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Yes. Are they having the same trouble with getting staff as we are over here?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

The last conversation I had with Luke was, whereas it used to be difficult before, they cannot get people over now. The industry over there has been struggling for a little while anyway. The last couple of years they have seen a massive decline, mostly we will call it the week-time trade just does not exist anymore; it is all falling on the weekends. You cannot support full-time employees just on 2 days that are busy and that is the real issue they are facing. If you cannot guarantee people hours and money they are not coming over to the island, they are not coming to get a job. You go away to work on the understanding that you are enjoying yourself but you are also doing it to make money; you are not doing it to barely have a living. I think the Guernsey model, it is interesting to see what they have changed in the last year and I think there are key points that have to be kept in focus because those changes are important. That is the key points we need to be focusing on; their original policy did not work.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Has the Guernsey model improved then or are there still problems with it?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

I am not sure if they have hit a perfect position with it. I think the issue they are having is a lot of damage was done when it was brought in, partly the way that policy was structured. Again, I was chatting with Luke and he had had a housekeeper who had been with him for over 10 years but because of how the new migration policy was structured she could not come back for another year and there was something about the way it came in. He lost someone who has been working with him for 10 years and loved the island and very passionate. We think 10 years, if they had not been away at certain points, they would have had their permanent residency by then. It is a shame that he has lost someone like that because you are not going to get a local person to go in to do the housekeeping. Again, it is like over here, you might find one or 2 people keen to do it but look at what Visit Jersey has done when you are trying to push up 1 million visitors and we are already over 700,000, you need the staff to service that.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Is part of the problem locally? You mentioned the skills gap earlier on with chefs, et cetera, training local people, is it because the business is basically industry and seasonal?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

No. We have got the hotels that are seasonal but there are enough restaurants, cafes, bars and a lot of the hotels are moving from seasonal into all year round now. In fact we have had quite a few in the last couple of years bridge that gap and so they are no longer closing during winter or they

are restricting how long they are closing for, which is brilliant to see. I am not going to lie, it really is good news for us. The skills gap, in particular, it is something we are working with. We have got a number of things coming up. Highlands College, chatting with their Catering Department, which we have possibly one of the best equipped facilities in the U.K. up there. We have just had the H.E.A.T. (Higher Education Access Tracker) competition over here and all the schools have said they could not believe how good our kitchen is and the equipment, which is a massive statement. I was chatting with Eileen, who runs the courses up there, their success rate coming out of the college is 100 per cent at the moment. The intake into the college has not been at capacity for a number of years. We have got a college that is providing the results, we have got facilities that are just absolutely superb but we cannot get the people into the courses.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Where do you think the main problem lies, is it money or hours?

[16:15]

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

There are a lot of things that are viewed as issues with the industry and I think quite a lot of this is about the P.R. (public relations) that is being put about hospitality. The hours do not exist like they used to anymore. I was a chef before anything, when I first did that a 70-hour week was a short week. These days that is not the case. These kids are lucky to get over 50 hours, and that is on a long week. The money, it is not great to start with but if you go and train as an electrician, as a plumber, as a mechanic, as anything, you do your time to get trained up. I get very frustrated and I have had a number of conversations with people who say: "I have been in this job for 10 years and I am still on just above minimum wage." I ask them: "What have you done to improve yourself? What courses have you done? What ways have you found to improve where you are?" The answer is: "Nothing." They presume this is going to be handed to them on a platter and I think that that is a mentality that we are struggling with. That is not just with our industry, I had this conversation with another industry recently and they are seeing exactly the same problem coming through. The local attitude about people going to work in hospitality, again, I had a conversation with one of my members. They had 2 kids come from ... I cannot remember if it was from Highlands or from one of the other schools, they were further education level. They were there, they had come in and done a load of work. They had done a short apprenticeship scheme in a hotel, they had done incredibly well. The hotel offered them very high pay for their time, I think it was somewhere between £25,000 and £30,000 a year; it is kind of them being ambassadors for the industry to help bring people in. Both sets of parents refused to let their kids work in hospitality and we lost that. It is a higher level to be brought in and then you get finance but that is the attitude we are facing at the moment.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Is there sort of a stigma attached to this?

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Yes, it is exactly so. Parents do not think that hospitality is a worthwhile industry to work in. I have to say, from my point, I find it very frustrating that it is viewed that way. It is also the idea that hospitality is just cooking, waiting or pouring drinks. We are trying to show the breadth of the industry at the moment, the fact it goes from everything from digital marketing through to accounts into H.R. (Human Resources), so it is a very broad industry to deal with. But this idea that it is not attractive, that it is only ever unsociable hours; it is not the most sociable hours, I will admit, but neither is nursing, neither is a lot of these other professions.

Senator S.C. Ferguson:

You really need to be doing a bit of education with careers masters and mistresses or whatever they are called, careers teachers.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Yes, it is exactly what we are doing at the moment. Part of our strategy going forward is we are moving now into primary schools, so we have realised come secondary schools it is too late to start this. We are trying to introduce programmes. We are trying to encourage schools to adopt a chef, so we have got a number of chefs up for adoption, so to speak. The idea is that they will go and start doing work with them from a very young age to get them understanding that being a chef is not a bad trade. The idea that we are low-wage, low-skill is the stigma around our industry at the moment and it is not the case. We have got some of these guys, the stuff you have to do, even to be a chef these days. The level of computing understanding, numbers, all of that and it is not just that, you have to understand nutrition, which is a word that has been thrown around for years. But if you look at the way people are viewing food at the moment, you have to be able to cater and understand what is going on with it. There is a lot of work to be done. I have only been in the role for 3 months, so I have not managed to get as much done yet but we are strongly working towards that at the moment.

Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Yes, because I would have thought there is quite a variety of jobs you can do, whether you are an accountant, a chambermaid, front of house, all these sort of things; it is a much bigger variety than perhaps the careers people understand.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

By having these conversations I have done a couple of the schools already. We are looking at obviously increasing that. Again, time has not been my friend so far but we are working to get round them all. Highlands does not even offer a receptionist course anymore, whereas it used to be one of the big courses they offered in hospitality. There is not numbers for them anymore. They have turned around and said any course we can get enough people on to run they will run it for us. We have the opportunity, we have the facilities there to do that. What we do not have is the people willing to go into the industry and, again, that is something we are strongly, strongly working towards.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I think probably what we are trying to do is to just get a very high level of flavour, if you want, of the issues; that has been rather helpful. Okay. Yes, we wanted to try and keep it fairly short, so if we can start towards wrapping up. I suppose 2 questions, I think one you have pretty well touched on but one was just to nail down. In the actual policy that is being put forward, do you think there is sufficient detail? In other words, people will be able to judge. The microphone does not pick up shakes of the head but ...

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

No, there is insufficient detail. As I have said, there has to be a clear understanding where the licence sits, how it does ... if the idea that you count anyone who does not hit 5 years as only a temporary resident, so to speak, or a non-resident, only here on a medium stay, if that is not counted into your migration figures, how many of them are we allowing to come in? Or if you are going to put a cap, do you allow for an unlimited amount under that? The idea that they are not staying and as one goes one normally comes back in.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

A final question, looking around, if you had to say kind of one key thing out of this from the point of your industry, what would that be? It can be 2 if you want to ...

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

I am just trying to think how to phrase it properly. Again, we are fully supportive of the idea of a policy coming through. We just want to make sure it is going to be brought forward in a way that if somebody has a right, if they have worked and they have developed and they are a key asset to the Island, we have to know there is a path for them to breach the 5-year point. We understand it is not going to be many, we are very clear about that but we have to know there is an opportunity there that if somebody comes over, if they are very skilled, if they are an asset to the business, a typical example would be a very good head chef that has brought a venue up to the level it is at, there has to be an opportunity for them to breach that and we have to understand what the criterion is. I think it is fair representation; that is the biggest thing. We have to know that our industry is not going to

suffer with this coming in short term, on the understanding that long term we are trying to fix this at the grassroots level with our local market.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I think that is probably enough though, is it not? Okay, I will just say thank you very much for your time. I suspect that any future panel ... obviously we are in our last days, as it were, prior to the elections but there will obviously be a new Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel and we have a very high expectation that they will be looking in some more detail into the policy.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Good.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Therefore, we suspect but not committing that they will probably want to get some more information back.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

I would hope so. We are very open with this. Again, I have seen a number of people standing on soapboxes, so to speak; we are not trying to do that. We know what has to happen. We just want to have a fair chance here and talk about what will work best for us.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Brilliant, thank you very much.

Association Manager, Jersey Hospitality Association:

Thank you.

Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

That concludes the hearing.

Deputy S.M. Brée:

Thank you very much.

Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Thank you.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Thank you.

[16:22]