

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER FOR BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST.
HELIER**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 29TH APRIL 2008

Question

In response to my question of 1st April 2008, the Chief Minister promised to give me evidence in writing that the statement “The survey and initial conference votes indicated a strong opposition to any increase in taxes and contributions” was correct; will he now do so?

Answer

All the evidence is presented in the report of the consultation findings published by Involve in February 2008. This document is publicly available and the Deputy continues to make selective quotes and ignores the context within which they are made. The section from Involve’s report referring to all the information that came out of the Imagine Jersey consultation process is reproduced below so that members can see exactly what was reported.

“There were mixed feelings among participants about the proposals to increase taxes and contributions to maintain current levels of public services. The submissions to the written consultation revealed a level of support for paying more, although some respondents stated that they would only support this if the finance industry would not be adversely affected, or only if the States of Jersey did more to control spending.

The survey and the initial conference votes indicated a strong opposition to any increase in taxes and contributions. However, when asked how much more people were prepared to pay, few participants maintained this position. In fact, when asked to come up with their own answers to the predicted budget deficit in 2035, all of the citizen groups choose to include an increase in taxes and contributions as part of their solution.

This may mean that whilst people do not actively support increases in taxes and contributions, many are willing to accept some level of increase in order to sustain public services.

Concerns raised in response to this option related to how tax increases would affect the cost of living, in particular for those less well off, and how it would affect Jersey’s attractiveness to overseas businesses.

Suggestions put forward included paying directly for some services, introducing social insurance schemes and raising the taxes for businesses and high earners.”