

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 26th JUNE 2018**

Question

In relation to Statistics Jersey and in light of commitments made by his predecessor during the last Assembly, will the Chief Minister –

- (a) advise whether a post which had been cut from the staff of Statistics Jersey has been restored and, if not, will he explain why not;
- (b) state whether funding has been put in place for an updated Income Distribution Survey to be run one year earlier than expected and, if so, what the timescale is for the Survey to be undertaken;
- (c) state what improvements, if any, he expects to see in the ability of Statistics Jersey to access data held by public authorities (such as the Social Security or the Tax Departments), in particular any data which may act as markers of income inequality; and
- (d) state whether it is his policy to reduce income inequality across all sectors of society and, if so, advise what further steps, if any, he intends to take to ensure that the Government has access to sound and reliable data by which to measure such inequality?

Answer

- (a) The reduction in staff numbers proposed in the 2016 – 2020 MTFP has not taken place.
- (b) The previous Council of Ministers wanted to deliver the Income Distribution Survey in 2018 – 2019, a year earlier than its normal, subject to funding being identified through budget allocation processes. This funding has not yet been identified.

The current Council is clear that policy making requires a strong evidential base, and that includes the Income Distribution Survey, and will be discussing with the Chief Statistician the earliest possible running of the survey, and reviewing the budget allocation with the States Treasury.

- (c) The Statistics and Census (Jersey) Law 2018 was approved by the Assembly in December 2017, and came into force in February 2018, and as a consequence, Statistics Jersey are now working with the Taxes Office and Social Security Department to obtain information, and subject to the assessment of Statistics Jersey, this will support the production of income distribution statistics, including relative low income and the gender pay gap.
- (d) The Council of Ministers has started to develop its common strategic policy and themes of social inclusion, helping people from all sectors of our society benefit from economic growth, and supporting all children to have the best start in life, have featured strongly in our initial discussions. The production of statistics by Statistics Jersey is important in the development and monitoring of policies in this area.