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Deputy S Mézec
Scrutiny Office
States Greffe
Mourier House
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Jersey
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19 August 2022

Dear Deputy Mézec

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel review of the Mini-Budget 2022 P.80/2022 (the Proposition).

Rubis Channel Islands have reviewed the Proposition and how it can assist Islanders with the unprecedented increases in fuel costs we have seen this year.

Home Heating

Included in the Proposition are references to schemes for Islanders to access support for their household, this needs to be clearly promoted and communicated, so eligible Islanders are aware. Rubis encourage and support these initiatives and would be happy to assist in promoting this to our customer base, who may not be aware of the support on offer.

Over the last 2 years we have provided £20,000 worth of heating oil vouchers, via The Salvation Army, to those who need assistance in the winter months. We intend to continue with this, but any additional targeted support included in the Proposition would be welcomed.

We have an experienced and locally based Customer Service Team who are well equipped to assist customers who may face difficulty this winter. We are already altering our processes to help those who need it, i.e. extending payment terms.

Despite the increases in the wholesale market, heating oil, is still the lowest cost option when compared with electricity or gas to heat your home.

From an environmental impact perspective, consideration could be made to bring forward policies in the Carbon Neutral Roadmap, to assist Islanders in insulating their homes or introducing incentives to switch to renewable forms of heating, like renewable heating oil or Solar PV.

Motor Fuel

There is no mention of support for Islanders and businesses using road fuel in the Proposition. Whilst drops in fuel duty have been used as a tool in many other jurisdictions, these are not specifically targeted to those who need help.

Schemes to assist businesses reliant on motor fuel e.g. logistics, fishing or agriculture could be introduced. These schemes could be targeted to support businesses facing significant increases in their cost base, costs which either cannot be recovered and/or would be passed on to the end consumer.

For Islanders, we would suggest that there could be a voucher scheme introduced utilising the eligibility criteria of an existing support scheme envisaged in the Proposition. Such a voucher scheme would provide focussed assistance to those in need and we would be more than happy to be involved in such scheme and accept the vouchers at our retail sites.

Any environmental impact could be mitigated by ensuring any scheme encouraged Islanders and businesses to switch to use a renewable fuel source, for example renewable diesel.

Summary

We as a business feel that assistance related to motor fuel is an area that could be developed in the Proposition, which would seek to assist Islanders and businesses with the unprecedented increase in fuel cost and associated impact.

The Proposition has many elements which will assist Islanders and it seems fundamental that any schemes available need to be communicated to Islanders to ensure uptake is maximised. Using industry to further communicate these messages would be a 'quick win'.

Any scheme which is targeted at home heating or motor fuel use, we would be happy to encourage our customer base to access the scheme available.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Nick Crolla". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nick Crolla

Head of Sales & Marketing
Rubis Channel Islands