



## **Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel**

### **Gender Pay Gap**

### **Witness: Assistant Chief Minister**

Tuesday, 6th May 2025

**Panel:**

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Chair)

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (Vice -Chair)

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North

Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour (co-opted)

**Witnesses:**

Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central, Assistant Chief Minister (1)

Deputy M. Ferey of Assistant Chief Minister (2)

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central, The Minister for Social Security

Mr. I. Cope, Chief Statistician

Mr. N. Fox, Associate Director, Justice Policy

[16:00]

**Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade (Chair):**

Thank you very much and welcome to this public hearing of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. Today is 6th May and this is our gender pay gap hearing with the Assistant Chief Minister and also the Minister for Social Security and the other Assistant Chief Minister. The panel is joined by Deputy Louise Doublet today, who has been co-opted for the purposes of this hearing. I think it is appropriate at this point to raise any declarations of interest that anybody wants to raise.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour:**

So I have one, if I may. I am a member of the Mind the Gap campaign group, which is a campaign group with the aim is to close the gender pay gap in Jersey.

**Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North:**

I also launched a proposition regarding a gender pay gap consultation, that is P.64/2024.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

I would like to draw everybody's attention to the following. The hearing will be filmed and streamed live, and the recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. We do not have any members of the public with us today. It is just us. Again, for the purpose of the recording and the transcript, I would be grateful if everyone who speaks could ensure that you state your name and role. I will start. I am Deputy Helen Miles, chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (Vice-Chair):**

Deputy Lucy Stephenson, vice-chair of the panel.

**Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:**

Deputy Jonathan Renouf, member of the panel.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Deputy Louise Doublet, I have been co-opted just for this hearing today.

**Deputy M.B. Andrews:**

My name is Deputy Max Andrews.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I am Deputy Carina Alves and I am Assistant Chief Minister.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

I am Deputy Lyndsay Feltham, and I am the Minister for Social Security.

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

Deputy Malcolm Ferey, Assistant Chief Minister.

**Chief Statistician:**

Ian Cope, chief statistician.

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

Nathan Fox, associate director of justice policy.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you very much. Just as a reminder as well, we have got 90 minutes for this hearing. Before we start, I just wanted to give a bit of context really. Usually when we have our quarterly hearings with the Chief Minister you probably get about 2 or 3 minutes on the gender pay gap and the like. We decided as a panel that we would like to do a longer hearing because of the level of interest really that there has been in this subject. I think it really started back in 2019 with the *Is There a Gender Pay Gap* report that was chaired by Deputy Doublet. There was also another follow-up report in 2022. There have been a couple of propositions. As I say, Deputy Andrews's proposition was put forward and also Deputy Doublet put forward a proposition as well. We thought it was timely to try and have a proper conversation about where the Government is headed, what the opportunities are, what the challenges are, so that at the end of the hearing we have almost got like a baseline, I guess, of where we are. There are a lot of us today so we will be chopping and changing and splitting up with questions. The first couple of questions from me. During the previous quarterly hearing with the Chief Minister, the Government confirmed that it is not intending to legislate the gender pay gap reporting for the private sector and we just wanted to know whether that was still the case.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes, so that is still the case. Gender pay gap reporting is already being completed by government and States-owned enterprises. The intention not to legislate is around ... I am sure you have probably heard the reasons before, but it is about placing too much burden on businesses. It would entail quite a significant cost to government as well to administrate that in terms of budget, but also the resources for legislative drafting and maintaining that. We do not automatically think that that will automatically ensure gender pay equality. Instead, what government is doing is it is focusing its resourcing on policies that will tackle

social inclusion and equality, and looking at a framework that can be used and endorsed by government.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

You have answered a couple of my following questions.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Sorry.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

That is absolutely fine. Just a couple of them, the rationale that you have given there is that the pay gap is a symptom and not the particular issue itself. But can you explain what you think the root causes are of the gender pay gaps in Jersey and what evidence base are you using to support that?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Obviously we have been looking at the work from the Gender Pay Gap Review Panel from 2019 and the follow-up from 2022. Obviously we are aware of things like gender stereotypes that influence subject choices, especially in education that women are often under-represented in the higher paying roles as well. We have seen that recently with our government C.E.O. (chief executive officer) who obviously was a woman; no longer is. Also there are possibly some unconscious biases in recruitment as well. That is something that government is looking to tackle. I would say that as a government we are looking at implementing policies and procedures that will work towards reducing that gender pay gap. Some of those things probably come under the Minister for Social Security's remit, so things like family friendly, employment law, changes to childcare.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

We will come up to that in more detail as we go through. You have said that the decision is not to legislate. Was that a unanimous decision around the Council of Ministers table?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

As far as I remember it was.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

It was obviously the cost and the burden. We had some talk with Statistics Jersey who went through what that would look like in practice. I do not know, Ian, if you want to maybe chip in there and give an overview.

**Chief Statistician:**

There had been a business case a couple of years ago, which we pulled together if government was going to go down this route, and to have like a website where businesses could drop their information in. Also we have recognised that to start with businesses would need support. So there was a budget factored in, for instance, for us to support them initially, et cetera. This was a policy for a business case, but we contributed to it.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

So no dissenting voices at all around the ...?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

No, and part of the C.S.P. (Common Strategic Policy) priorities was not to be overburdensome on businesses and allow them to grow and not be overly bureaucratic. But there are still lots of things that we can do and lead the way on having a positive outlook on the gender pay gap, and hopefully businesses will follow the lead from government.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Can I ask what the cost to government would be?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think it was originally estimated about £500,000.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

A year?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I do not know if that was initial set up. Was that initial set up?

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

I think the original business case was something in the region of £500,000 over a 2-year period. The costs are primarily having an online reporting portal to allow businesses to get

their information easily available and to match it up. There were going to be some ongoing staffing requirements to ensure that there was an access place in government that businesses could make inquiries and other things. There were the associated I.T. (information technology) and security costs on an on-running basis, such as website maintenance and everything else. The initial setup was in the region of £500,000 for the first 2 years. Because the business case ended there, what the ongoing cost would be year on year into the foreseeable future was never really calculated.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Can I ask what Government would be prepared to spend in order to address gender inequality?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think at the moment we do not have anything agreed with regard to a budget specifically for that. What we do have is 0.2 of a policy officer that is working on D.E.I. (diversity, equity and inclusion) as a whole. Obviously that is not just gender pay gap. That also includes things like the International Cultural Centre as well.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Do you think that is enough, a fifth of a full-time officer?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Personally, no, I do not, but I understand that people have different views around the Council of Ministers. Ideally I would like somebody maybe full-time to bring everything together. Actually some of the discussions that we have had between us was about whether D.E.I. should stay under the Chief Minister or whether it should move back into Social Security because that is where a lot of the operational things are. But I think in order to keep it with the correct focus and to ensure that it is recognised as a cross-government - is "issue" the right word - approach, then I think keeping it under the Chief Minister is probably the best place. However, I would appreciate more resource in that area.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

What would be the increase in budget from a fifth of an officer to a full-time officer? Does anybody ...?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think I will have to hand over to Nathan. We had some chat about that.

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

I do not have the precise calculation in front of me, but if there was a decision to put a policy officer in post it would be, I imagine, a standard policy officer cost. I do not have the ...

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

What kind of grade would that be?

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

We usually run at standard policy office grades 10 to 12 on an escalator arrangement.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Does someone know what 10 to 12 is?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

Twelve is 85? Top of 12.

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

For total cost of employment, I think that is right. Including the social security and everything.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Within the statement that was made in response to P.64, there was a phrase used there that said Ministers want to avoid the pitfalls of mandatory reporting. Could you clarify to the panel what you meant by that?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think it was around having to do some checking to ensure that businesses are actually complying with the legislation. That would be quite a cumbersome task. There has also been some data around whether pay gap reporting is effective. From the Economics Department, I have a bit here that says that there were researchers at the London School of Economics that found that a greater pay gap reporting led to a 1.6 reduction in pay gaps. But some similar findings have been found with respect to Denmark. However, the

reduction in gender pay gaps in Denmark was through pay for men decreasing. So, Ian, I do not know if you want to come in on there around ...

**Chief Statistician:**

No, I do not have anything to add.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

That is fine. It was sort of around that I suppose, whether the cost would outweigh the benefit.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

So in terms of the cost and the effectiveness, I understand that research. I have seen that research as well. I was able to discuss this research with one of the former senior economists who again she said to me that yes, just reporting alone might not close the gender pay gap and there should be sanctions. Some might say that just publishing the figures is actually a middle ground. Some countries are looking at having gender pay gap reporting legislation with sanctions for companies that do not comply with it. So we could view just the reporting as a middle ground and as an indicator of your other measures that are working. Personally, I see the gender pay gap as a key measure of gender equality. I think it is still worth doing, even if it is not solving the problem in itself. Would you consider thinking about the legislation from that point of view as a really valuable piece of data that would tell us whether all of these other things are working?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think as far as government reach goes, I suppose, we are currently having discussions with the private businesses. I just think that legislation you mentioned there like sanctions, it would be the policing of making sure that that legislation is actually being followed and all of those things that make it very complicated. I think action plans are more important in addressing that. I think that if we can continue with our work with the private sector, which I think probably Nathan can expand on a little bit, with working towards producing a framework that can be endorsed by government and publicly put out there is probably a bit more beneficial and cost effective.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**



I do have some questions about that. So in terms of voluntary reporting, one of the reasons that, when I have spoken to businesses, some of them are in favour of a date is that some of them are already doing it on a voluntary basis. Some of them publish that. Some of them are not publishing it. But that having an indicative date, whether it was through mandatory legislation or whether it was a voluntary date, that would mean that those companies could put it all out there at the same time and you are less exposed doing that. In terms of voluntary, is that something that the Government is committing some resources to promoting a date where ...

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes, that is what we are working towards with the work that officers have been doing. Do you want to elaborate on that?

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

I would be happy to. Would the panel like me to dwell a moment on the legislative question as well, because that is something that we looked at?

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

By all means.

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

The legislation in the U.K. (United Kingdom) provides that businesses, I think, over 250 staff need to report. If you apply that to Jersey, I think we found it was very, very few businesses. So in order for it to operate in Jersey you would have to bring the number down. I think 50 was given; only ever indicative. Just like: "Would it not be interesting if we tried this number; 50 people?" The problem with that is of course you bring the necessary work to comply down to businesses smaller than any other large jurisdiction would expect to comply. So you have this additional layer of difficulty for the smaller businesses. With legislation as well ... it is interesting you talk about sanction, Deputy. In the U.K. at the moment I think the reference is made if there is a failure to report to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission for consideration of things like a publicity order.

[16:15]

Now in Jersey, of course, with things scaling badly, as they do, if you are trying to recreate that structure in Jersey you would end up something far too big for 100,000 people with, as currently designed with one job, which was a G.P.G. (gender pay gap) reporting. So if you do not have that, what do you do? The only real sanction the States has in the absence of an entity designed to manage it is take them through the courts. Then you have a situation where you have smaller businesses in the U.K. being required to comply with a criminal sanction; it would fundamentally be ultimately a criminal sanction because it would be a fine. You could run it as a civil, but it would be a fine. Then if the fine was not paid, then the company would be in default and potentially the directors could be liable. You have this fundamental difference between the 2 jurisdictions that does make it considerably more complicated to legislate here. Now that is not to say value judgment has been taken by civil service to say it is impossible to do. It is probably not. But it is different and it is more complex and it tends towards the more voluntary side, from our analysis anyway.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Can I ask what your advice would be as an officer if the Government were to go forward with mandatory reporting legislation? What would your advice be around sanctions or no sanctions?

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

It entirely depends how much money is willing to be committed to resolve the issue. The gold standard would be to build something roughly equivalent to the U.K. where you have a group of individuals who can manage a graduated and proportionate response outside of criminal sanctions and simple fines to manage the situation. But in reality, probably if you did a cost-benefit analysis you end up saying that is too much, so you end up with a sanctions regime; criminal or civil. I do not think we ever grounded out, really, what it would be. Anything is possible if resources are committed. The question is: in a jurisdiction this size, what proportion of our national resources are willing to commit to any individual problem, including this?

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

What would your advice as an officer be? What would you advise is a proportionate and reasonable measure in this area?

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

We never costed the legislation, I must admit. The business case for what it would cost to do mandatory reporting requirements was costed. The legislative development as a concept was costed. The ongoing cost of running an E.C.H.R. (European Convention on Human Rights) equivalent was never costed, so I simply do not know what it would look like.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

Can I just test some of the assumptions you made there? You said 250 would be too high a threshold in the Jersey context, but I think quite a few employers would fit in that bracket. KPMG declare over 350, big banks and financial institutions and so on.

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

There would be some.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

Would it not be a plausible starting point to start at the same threshold as the U.K. and with that change the calculus?

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

So, Ian, we did the numbers, but I cannot remember what they came out as.

**Chief Statistician:**

I do not know the number above 250. They are the ones that are likely to be part of U.K. groups and already reporting in U.K., and therefore would find it relatively easy to report for Jersey because ...

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Because they have the numbers already.

**Chief Statistician:**

... they have the mechanisms in the system.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

This was going to be my follow up.

**Chief Statistician:**

There are about 180 businesses that employ more than 50 people in Jersey. I would imagine now the number, off the top of my head, that employ more than 250 will be small.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

The point being that a lot of these companies, as you say, will already be involved in this. I have the Lloyds *Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap* report in front of me and it says that they do this and are proud to do it. NatWest do something very similar. They say: "Holding ourselves to account by measuring our progress in gender and ethnic diversity and publishing our pay gaps is an important part of maintaining momentum towards achieving" this vision." Given that they are already doing it, starting with the companies that are probably able to do it, seems to me, not to put too big a regulatory burden on, but gets the ball rolling. It says to people this is happening and maybe create some momentum for change.

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

It may very well. The 50 figure simply came from doing the costings for a business case and saying: "What throughput volume are going to have to manage using the system we built?" Is it 250? Probably not because there are not many. What would give us a reasonable throughput, what might it look like in Jersey for the numbers? The answer was 50; it gives you about 180, as Ian remembered. So that is the kind of throughput we will analyse our costs on. There was never a strategic decision taken that 50 was right or wrong.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Yes, I think the 50 was as a result of some of the conversations I had with Ian and his staff when I was drafting my proposition. But I think that is an interesting addition to the conversation. We talked about sanctions as maybe something on the more extreme end and middle ground. I am not advocating for that, by the way. I am trying to understand whether it has been discussed. Another area that I would like to understand: has it been discussed as action plan? So whether it is mandatory reporting or whether it is some kind of government guidance around voluntary reporting, will there be action plans as part of that?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

As part of the talks that have been going on with Jersey Electric, PwC, Prosperity 24/7 and I.o.D. (Institute of Directors), they are pursuing a development of guidance, which can be provided to businesses as a standardised tool. We are hoping that we will be able to review that guidance and then obviously endorse it and ensure that it is published. I think we had some talk around timeline for that. We were hoping by the end of this year that that would happen. I do not know if you wanted to, because I know you went to the Mind the Gap recently, because officers have also been working with Mind the Gap as well.

### **The Minister for Social Security:**

I did attend last month's meeting of the Mind the Gap community, which was really good and positive. It was helpful actually because that meeting was the same week that Statistics Jersey had released the gender pay gap figures, which then led to a really good springboard for conversations within that community, which is not only a community of women but allied men as well, which is really important. Just to go over some of what was discussed before around government resources. We know where we want to get to and we know the outcomes. But for me, it is around as well how we best utilise the resources at our disposal to make sure that we are having the most positive conversations to put us in the very best place to be acting on the action plans that the Assistant Chief Minister just spoke about. That has to be based on positive conversations with businesses. For me, the discussion around mandatory reporting, particularly with small businesses, every time I try and bring a progressive change to the Employment Law I end up with a difficult conversation with business representatives about the effect on small, in particular. I think we have got an opportunity at the moment where we have leadership from within the corporate sector wanting to work with government. We have companies following best practice and you have mentioned some yourselves there. What we know is that when we are looking at recruitment and retention of employees, people are looking for their employers to have things like gender pay gap reporting action plans in place. I think that it is something that we very much need to do in partnership in a positive way with the private sector., but take those that are more hesitant along in the journey with us. Because my concern around legislating at the moment, specifically for smaller businesses, would be that we may then end up with negativity within the business community about gender pay gap reporting, when what we want is the positivity and people to see this as a good thing. That is where I am coming from when I talk about how we utilise our energy and our resources within this space. But it is really good to see the work that the I.o.D. is doing together with the Mind the Gap community. I have made a conscious decision not to join that community myself because

it is that community's role to lobby Ministers such as myself around things that we need to be doing. I really welcome that challenging discussion.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

You talked there about taking people on a journey and I appreciate that, and you do not want to just spring things on people. It takes time and you have to work through these things together. I think it was 2019 that the Assistant Chief Minister 2 Governments ago - Richard Buchanan, I think - I was sat in the room when he said: "If we do not have this number [I cannot remember the number] of companies voluntary reporting by this date then we will bring in mandatory reporting." Now COVID then happened and when everybody regrouped after it was, well, businesses are recovering from COVID, so let us let them recover and then we will return to that plan. It is not a surprise to businesses. I suppose my question is: how long is that journey going to be? How long do you see it being?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think we have to be honest here. We have to remind ourselves that we have to be strict with the budget this year. Ultimately anything that involves legislation and putting new things in place is going to take its time. It is going to take money. Whether that becomes available I guess will dictate how long things will take. I mentioned earlier that I only have one day a week of an officer. So I think it is just again, I suppose, imposing things through legislation as well does not always mean that it is one-size-fits-all. I just think maybe it is something for the Government to consider - maybe not - maybe at the end of this political term, but I do not think it will be something that will be pursued in this time.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

If money was no object ...

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

If only.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

... would it be on the table? Would it be in action now?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think so, yes.

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

I think if money was no object we would have a standard reporting form and everyone could feed into that. Banks and other organisations are already doing something. We just feed into a standard reporting form and we could roll out the statistics at the end of each month or each year.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

You did just touch on it there. You said you have your 0.2 of a policy officer, which equates to one day a week. Does that cover all of your work around diversity, equity and inclusion?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Well, I would argue no, but I would say that it does cover the 3 objectives that the Chief Minister outlined, which obviously one of them was around D.E.I. One of them was V.A.W.G. (Violence Against Women and Children), which has its own kind of dedicated team around that. We have the gender pay gap, so it would cover the gender pay gap and the work that I am doing around the International Cultural Centre as well. But obviously, you know ...

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

My question was: could you provide a quick update on your role in those areas? Which I suppose you have talked about the 3 key areas there, if you just kind of give us a quick update.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I suppose V.A.W.G. falls more under the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs. The I.C.C. (International Cultural Centre), we have currently had a bit of a rejig and a refocus, if you like, of what exactly we want to provide with that on the back of the findings with the Work Permit Policy Review Panel. We have really concentrated on ensuring that we are going to provide some specialised caseworkers for our migrant communities, so that work is being progressed. I do not want to give too much away now because there will be an announcement around that. But it will be falling under E.S.S.H. (Employment, Social Security and Housing) because that is more to facilitate access to the systems and to ensuring people are getting timely information and support and advocacy, I suppose, more than anything. That is where things lie with the I.C.C. Obviously the gender pay gap, we

have officers who are meeting with businesses to get that framework, if you like, and that guidance written.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Do you know when you expect ... you say an announcement is coming on that work. Do you know when you are expecting that?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think probably about June time. I want to do it before summer.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

Can I just follow up on one point you raised there, which was you were having conversations with businesses around gender pay gap reporting? Do you have resistance?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think I will probably have to hand over to Nathan because he has been the officer that has been having those conversations.

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

My staff have, I have not directly except for participating in a car. I do not get the impression, from what is fed back to me, that there is significant resistance to the concept. But then again, when one talks about positive concepts, there is often very little resistance. It is the nitty gritty and the difficulties and the edges and what is in, what is out, how the structure is designed, where you start to get people saying: "Well, that does not quite work for me." Then I think that tends to be where resistance emerges, whether you are doing it voluntarily or in a legislative sense, and we have not got to the stage of having a design piece to take to people and say: "Does this work for you?" yet. There are a few decisions to take around that, for instance ...

[16:30]

I do not know if you want me to go into the issue of the design of how you might do it now. So the U.K. has, I think, something in the region of 7 pieces of guidance to go to an excruciating length on how exactly you do your gender pay gap reporting. It is all fairly slick to organise when it is set up, but there are some fundamental questions that need to be answered in order to get a coherent set of figures across all industries, and they are probably not quite the same answer in every jurisdiction. So what is a full-time, what is a part-time employee? Who are you counting? Are you counting



temporary workers or not? Zero hours, treatment of. You have the question of bonuses, deferred bonuses, share options ...

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

Overtime.

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

Precisely. There are different values of overtime available. You have your snapshot reporting date, which is tax day in the U.K. It might not work here, I am not sure. So you have all these decisions that need to be taken, and when you start taking those and talking to businesses about it, and just from other projects, when you come up with an idea and half of them like it and half of them do not, you start to get friction around people saying: "Well, no, do it my way because this suits me better", especially if they are reporting in the U.K., and they want it to be like that. But you are selling it to other businesses as: "No, it is much simpler than the U.K." Then you have an immediate ... you have 2 constituencies. You have people who want it like the U.K., and people who want it as simple as possible. All that is yet to be undergone. So that is where you will start to see resistance emerging, I think, and businesses say: "No, no, great idea, but the practicality is at issue for us."

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

I am glad you have touched on the methodologies there, and I think you mentioned overtime pay and things, because in relation to the public sector pay gap reporting we have ... there has been a change in the methodology that has been used recently from looking at overall monthly earning to hourly rates of pay. Does that affect how we are able to compare the data looking ...

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes. I was going to say, I know that we follow the U.K. guidelines on that, and we do not ...

**Chief Statistician:**

Yes. So obviously my team are not responsible for the Government of Jersey's gender pay gap reporting, but we have advised them.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Who is responsible then, sorry, just for clarity?

**Chief Statistician:**

People Services.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Thank you.

**Chief Statistician:**

So they produce the Government's gender pay gap. The change in methods was based on our feedback on some earlier drafts where we pointed out that they were not following the kind of same guidance as the U.K. and, for comparability purposes, that is helpful. So U.K. guidance, you include bonuses, but you do not include overtime, and you should be focusing on contracted hours. Government of Jersey revised their ... I think it was their 2022 data. So the data that they are now publishing is consistent over time because they went back and revised 2022.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Okay. So we do have comparative data, because that has been ...

**Chief Statistician:**

Yes.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Right. Great, okay.

**Chief Statistician:**

I will just say that the all economy gender pay gap reporting that we do, we do actually include overtime, but because it is based on the administrative data we cannot exclude it. Ideally we would like to exclude it, but we cannot. The way that the Government of Jersey's gender pay gap reporting is as close as we can get it to the U.K., we do not have all of the data that you would ideally like, but it is as close as we can get it.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Okay. Has any assessment been carried out about the impact of excluding that overtime, which means it may obscure what the reality of the pay gap actually is?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

I think it is likely that it will because generally men would find it easier to take on overtime, perhaps more easy than women who may have care and responsibilities or other commitments. So if you cut it across, then broadly speaking more overtime would be paid to men than to women.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

So there is a chance by not including it, it is obscuring an element of it?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

I am sure there is.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Okay.

**Chief Statistician:**

But you are kind of looking at hourly rates as opposed to total remuneration. The gender pay gap is calculated in terms of the hourly rates rather than the total remuneration.

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

The hourly rate for that grade.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

That brings me on, if I can slightly broaden out just for a moment to get a bigger picture of the question of gender inequity more generally, and I suspect this might be for Ian, but not necessarily. What is the best data we have at the moment about gender inequity more generally in society? What touch points do we have data-wise to know about that?

**Chief Statistician:**

In addition to the reporting that we do, which is the all economy gender pay gap reporting, which we have been doing for a couple of years now, there is some information in J.O.L.S. (Jersey Opinion and Lifestyle Survey) and we could potentially ask more in that space, but there is not really very much else in terms of gender inequality. You have obviously got the kind of V.A.W.G. (Violence Against Women and Girls) reporting and their recommendations in that space, but I do not think that is an issue that we have got a wealth of data on, to be honest.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I know that Gov also reports on the gender splits across all levels of the organisation as well. When you mentioned J.O.L.S. there was mention about maybe some questions going into the census.

**Chief Statistician:**

So the U.K. census they ask about unpaid care and the number of people that are doing more than a certain number of hours of unpaid caring. That is not something that we have ever included in the census in the U.K., and that would give you a hand. It is not necessarily just women, it can be children as well ... looking after children and elderly people as well. So that is something when we are considering the 2031 census, if there were demand for questions in that space, it is something that could give you a handle on are women doing more unpaid caring than men, et cetera.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

Is health data or anything in there at all?

**Chief Statistician:**

Are you talking about kind of ...

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

Outcomes.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Are you talking about gender data across the board, not just to do with pay?

**Chief Statistician:**

The census asks about people who have got long-term limiting illness, which we analyse by sex. I cannot remember what the data shows.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

Okay. All right.

**Chief Statistician:**

We analyse by sex and age and if there were different cross-tabulations that were required, we could potentially look into that.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

Is there any data, or any plans to collect data, that would feed into the discussion around the contributing factors to the gender pay gap?

**Chief Statistician:**

I do not think there are at the moment.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I wonder whether the discussions ... you are part of the women's political group?

**The Minister for Social Security:**

Yes. We did have a discussion as part of the Women's Health Advisory Group just last week as well about the link between health and equality, and also the work that we might do around women in work as well. Those discussions will be continuing. There are broader discussions as well. You

touched on societal reasons why we might have the gender pay gap and what factors contribute to that. Again, off the back of the Stats Jersey report, when I had the conversation with the Mind the Gap community, we were discussing around those factors as well. One factor for me that I always think could be tackled is one around pay transparency. We know that women are likely to negotiate differently to men pay when you start a new job or get offered a job, maybe based on your previous salary, for example, so there are all of those things. As the Minister responsible for the Jobs in Jersey area of the website, I have asked my team if they can do some work on encouraging employers to be more transparent with their pay. I am disappointed to see how much is listed as negotiable still on the website, because that is something that really would make a big difference again. There could be a legislative change there within the Employment Law to outlaw the people not being able to discuss pay with their employees, but that would be something that I would need to consult quite heavily with the private sector on, because that is ... and again this is part of the conversation I had about how embedded that is within the culture, within our workplaces, within Jersey, and that is why we saw that high gender pay gap in ...

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

In the legal and finance. Absolutely, yes.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

Exactly. Which is where that data that we have got just a few weeks ago is really interesting. We also see those peaks when people are ...

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Age-related as well.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

Yes. And bonuses, and the effects that they have there. So there is a lot of cultural work that needs to be done. Also there is the work around parental responsibilities and caring responsibilities as well so that it is not always the woman that is seen as that. We have improved parental benefits and trying ... and I am looking forward to seeing my Scrutiny Panel's review when that comes out. That again is why it is so important for Scrutiny to work with Ministers so that you get the opportunity to really deep dive into topics that I do not necessarily get to do, and I think that that is really valuable. But going back to the public sector, what is fascinating for me in relation to that is we do have pay transparency in the public sector, but we still have a gender pay gap. That suggests that there is other societal norms or issues that need to be addressed in order to address that as well.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

The point is though that you have the data so you can address and measure and so on. That seems to me the basic starting point, and if we look at the Minister for Housing, for example, he is talking about the need to have proper data on rents as being the basis for which he can make legislative changes. He is putting into the legislation that that should happen in the Residential Tenancy Law. That seems to me to be the first thing we need to do, and we are not doing it in this case.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think that is a fair point.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

With your permission, Chair, could I skip to question 31, because it relates ...

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Certainly.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

The Minister for Social Security talked about care burden on women and domestic responsibilities, which of course in the 2 gender pay gap reports, we pointed that out as a factor in the gender pay gap existing in Jersey. In terms of data, what data is there to help us understand what is actually happening in our homes as opposed to our workplaces, in terms of gender equity in terms of caring and domestic responsibilities?

**The Minister for Social Security:**

I think we all know that there are big gaps in data, so I am not going to pretend that there are not. Obviously we do have the body of work that is undertaken by Statistics Jersey, which can tell us in certain areas what issues are. We also have the opportunity from the Scrutiny reports as well, and there is the work that you do, because I am sure that you are getting evidence in with your review on the parental benefits and the family friendly work that we have done. We can always do with more data. Also, one of the factors that we have discussed before across this group and table is people being able to afford to take time off to be with their children as well, balancing that up, and also enabling them to have those career opportunities when they return to work. Obviously, we do now have a day one right to request flexible working. I was discussing only today about suitable reasonable adjustments in terms of disability. But there is work to do about employers understanding adjustments and flexibility, and what that might mean for their workplace. Again, people knowing their rights. We have had this conversation before about improving communication so that employees as well know their rights. That is one of the requests that I have also made to our communications team is not just to rely on J.A.C.S. (Jersey Advisory and Conciliatory Service),

which do a really good service around communicating rights, but also there is a role for us, as government, to do a “know your rights” communication campaign as well.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Thank you. Given that we do not have that data on what is happening in the homes around gender equality, what work is government doing to recognise and account for the economic value of unpaid care work? What can you do without that data? Is there anything that you are doing?

**Chief Statistician:**

I will pick this one up. There was a Scrutiny recommendation in this space about 3 years ago, which I responded to, or Dan responded to actually. We follow international United Nations guidance on measurement of G.D.P. (gross domestic product), G.V.A. (gross value added), which excludes unpaid domestic work. Now, some countries, like the U.K., produce what is called a satellite account, so you try to estimate it separately. But to do it properly you really need to run time-use surveys where you are asking people how they are actually spending their time. It is not just women, it is men doing D.I.Y. (do it yourself) or gardening, or whatever the stereotypical things that men or women do.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Women do D.I.Y. things, for the record.

**Chief Statistician:**

I recognise they might. They are extremely complex and very expensive to run and, certainly in the Jersey context, it would not be a priority even for within Statistics Jersey. I would much rather re-run the income and expenditure survey again. That is probably more urgent in a Jersey context. I cannot see us doing anything in this space anytime soon, frankly.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

We do have home carers’ allowance, so I think that there is some data around that that can be ...

**The Minister for Social Security:**

With the improvements to the social security systems as well, that should improve our access and ability to pull data through our system.

[16:45]

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

It does not pick up the informal carers at all though, does it?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

No.

It is the informal ...

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Basically, if you are in employment, you do not qualify for having carers' allowance.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

So how do you know where to target your policies and legislation without that data?

**The Minister for Social Security:**

Well, that is a great question actually. We are always working with the data that we have and the evidence that we get from the population that we interact with on a day-to-day basis. We can respond and make things better as previous governments have done with family friendly legislation. Just before I came into office, of course, that was reviewed, as you have observed. It was a light touch review at the time, Scrutiny are picking that up. We have all got that role to play as Assembly Members in each of our roles to identify where the gaps are.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

It is that engagement, is it not? I know we regularly engage with groups, like Carers Jersey, as well. I do not know, Malcolm, if you want to touch on the charities and just having that link.

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

Exactly. So there is a whole group of people out there, informal carers and charitable support, which just goes unmeasured. There is a piece of work to do there to get underneath the skin and understand ...

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Can I just clarify? So when I refer to care, I am not just talking about kind of extraordinary care and illness-related care, I am talking about also everyday parenting and perhaps elderly relative-type of care.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Just to pick up on that as well, I think, Ian, you mentioned the J.O.L.S., so in the 2024 J.O.L.S., there was a question around volunteering and things like that. There is kind of informal data if you like but how ...

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**



It is tricky, is it not?

**Chief Statistician:**

So we have never asked in J.O.L.S. about unpaid care. It might be something we could explore. But as you know at the moment, we had suspended next year's so we would not be coming to it for another 2 years.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

It is clear, Ministers, from what you are saying to us, that it is a priority for you to understand what the care situation is in homes and what gender equality is like in homes. It is also clear that the resources are not there to do a time-use survey. Do you not feel that we should be diverting resources to do that time-use survey so that we do not have that moment of: "Oh, we do not have the data." Should we not do that survey?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

In an ideal world. The overarching solution to all of this would be just to have an integrated system across government everywhere where all the departments communicate with each other. I know that under E.E.S.H., for example, there is data on the movement of parents returning to work. It is not really as accurate as it could be if we had a much more integrated system across the whole of government, so I do not ...

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

So do you agree that we should try to find the resources to do that time-use survey?

**Chief Statistician:**

I am just repeating ...

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

I would really like the Minister to answer.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Whatever surveys we do we need to make sure that they are as far reaching as possible and give us the data that we really need. This is where we rely on Statistics Jersey to advise us on what is the best way ... the best surveys to do in order to do that and to be cost-effective, because I think every department is experiencing strict budgets and things like ... in an ideal world, again, if budget was not an issue, I would love that. That integrated system would mean that Statistics Jersey would not have to do so much work because it would all be on a system that could be easily pulled, but that does not exist unfortunately.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Would you consider going away and costing it and seeing if it would be possible? Perhaps not within existing Statistics Jersey, it might be a resource that could be brought in, given that it has been recommended in a Scrutiny review, and it is something that would be a critical piece of data collection? Could you go away and think about that and perhaps get back to the panel?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes, I am happy to take that away.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Thank you.

**Chief Statistician:**

Can I just make a point? One of Statistic Jersey's strategies, and I think you are aware, is to make increased use of administrative data. We are doing that for population, and the gender pay gap report is based on data that is already available. As the Assistant Chief Minister said, there is potential to link up data already held across departments much more effectively than we currently do, and that could give you quite a lot of benefits. Now, there are I.T. constraints at the moment; systems do not talk to each other very well.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Exactly, yes.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

That is not ideal, is it?

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Just to move on slightly, but still on the theme of data, as we move on to ... but the Chief Minister's comments to P.13/2024 explain that expanding the availability of childcare to parents would have a significant impact on pay equality, and that is something that the Government is working on, I believe. How is that going to be evidenced?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Honestly, I do not know how that will be evidenced. I suppose it will be looking at the numbers of the uptake, because that is the other thing, we are not entirely sure on what the need is out there. Once we start providing more placements ... this is something that I will put my other hat on from an education perspective, we have had talks about that. It may be that we find that there is a bigger

need for it than we initially thought. It is something that is constantly under review. I suppose it is impossible to directly measure and demonstrate. I do not know, Ian, if there was any statistics that we could ...

**Chief Statistician:**

I think when you are in this space, you are either talking about the impact of the policy and how it rolls out the activity. Hopefully you might see changes in the gender pay gap over time. Of course, it is very difficult to say that policy intervention led to that impact.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

As part of the policy development, though, will you be putting in performance measures so that exactly this sort of thing can be measured as part of the development?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

That is definitely something that needs to be looked at and needs to be considered. Again, we will not know until things start rolling out what the need is. I know there has been some other work around getting parents back into the workplace as well through education. For example, I know that C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) have done some work around we need more teaching assistants, for example, and a lot of parents often have transferable skills but not necessarily the qualifications. That is something that Education has been looking at, encouraging people who have been parents, whose children may now be in education, instead of maybe going into roles that would be lower paying and more difficult to manage with childcare.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

It is interesting in the way that you are describing this because it just keeps coming back into my head about outcomes-based accountability framework. If you are aiming as your outcome as reducing the gender pay gap, necessarily in the policy design you would be saying: "Okay, well, what do we need to know to show that we can evidence that pay gap?" Again, the 3 questions: "How much have you done? How well did you do it? Is anybody better off?" What we are hearing is ... is there a coherent policy to pull everything together that is going on across departments that will contribute to that big outcome, or are we not looking at it in that way?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I cannot think of anything like that that is currently happening from us.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Okay. So there is nothing actually pulling it together as a whole? We have got bits and pieces going on everywhere but the outcome to reduce the gender pay gap does not seem to have been prescribed as an outcome.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I wonder if that is where if we had the resource, if we had a dedicated policy officer who was full-time, that work would be easier to manage and easier to do.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

To direct. Okay. Thank you.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

You are right in terms of the focused on outcomes-based accountability, and as work progresses on that within government then it will become the way we do things. Well, it should become the way we do things.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Unfortunately, it always was the way we did things, which then made it easier to articulate what we are trying to articulate in terms of difference. So that is good to hear. The Children's Department did it very well already, because O.B.A. (outcomes-based accountability) was incorporated into their plan, but everything else seems to have gone a bit fragmented. Okay. That is a different issue. Sorry, Lucy, carry on.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

I wonder if I could pick up on, as you mentioned, teaching assistants, specifically in trying to encourage people into that area and making use of the fact we have got the Minister for Social Security here, that there had been some challenges, and I think it was being encountered particularly by women, with the amount of working hours and the clashing with income support, and they are being told to go and seek jobs over the summer when they exactly wanted to be caring for their children.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

That has been solved, has it not?

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Has that been sorted out?

**The Minister for Social Security:**

Yes. It is something that I have had lots of conversations about. I was very keen to resolve that. We know that we need ... again, this comes back working effectively across government, does it not? We know that we need teaching assistants, and we need them to feel comfortable and valued in their roles. So yes, that was absolutely ...

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

We also know that that is an occupation that is segregated as well. It is predominantly women.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

That is something that has been sorted out and is it being encountered as an issue for people now?

**The Minister for Social Security:**

No. The last conversation I had about that was a couple of weeks ago when I followed up with my officers around that.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

I understood that was resolved at the end of the previous Government. That was my understanding of it. If there are still problems, there should not be. I could be wrong though.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Maybe could we, between us, take it away and find out.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

I do not think it is appropriate to discuss any kind of particular cases. There may well be people that are not working full-time as a teaching assistant, and that is where it gets more complex.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Can we move on to the parental leave section? I am just conscious of time.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Can I ask just a quick follow up on the teaching assistants? Again, different hat, but there was a planned review of teaching assistants' pay. Has that been ...?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes. So it was pay and terms and conditions. I know there has been a massive recruitment drive where they did some central training for teaching assistants, which then meant that ... because I think before schools were individually hiring teaching assistants. Now we are bringing them into a central pool. They are being trained centrally, which equips them with the ...

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

They had pay increases though?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think they are still on the ...

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

If you get back to us.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I think that is still on the same.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Moving on to parental leave. How would you categorise Jersey's position on welfare policies regarding work/family reconciliation?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Do you want to answer that?

**The Minister for Social Security:**

What was the last word?

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Work/family reconciliation and how would you ... where we are now currently and our welfare policies with helping that work/life balance in families.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

Over the past few years we have come an awful long way with the implementation of the parental benefit and the changes in legislation around rights around parental leave. Obviously we have got now 2 parents able to take the 6 weeks' full paid leave. Again, this is a conversation we have had across the Scrutiny table before around the affordability of taking more leave than that if you are reliant on the parental benefit as possibly your own sole income. Obviously that is a contributory benefit, so any thought around that would need to be placed alongside all of the contributory benefits and the longevity of the Social Security Fund as well. I think that we are in agreement here around communication, and that is where my conversation went with my communications officer the other day around wanting to have some kind of "know your rights" communication go out. I know that people get information coming to them via the midwives, and the application process for your

parental benefit is started within the health service, which is a really good example of cross-government working in collaboration and systems working together, so theoretically nobody should miss out on knowing what their rights are. Employers also need to have more knowledge around how they can support people as they re-enter their workplace and also provide that flexible working. It is great that we have day one right to flexible working within the legislation. However, to enable people to make the best use of that, it is around supporting people to make those decisions, know how to ask for flexible working, but also for the employers as well to know how to give that flexible working within the realms of what is possible for their business as well. We have come a long way, but it is still a work in progress.

[17:00]

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Perfect, thank you. How has the Government evaluated the effectiveness of the current parental leave policies in relation to promoting gender equality as well? Is that something that it has looked at?

**The Minister for Social Security:**

Obviously we had the touch review. That review in itself did not touch on that. We will get the Scrutiny review coming through and I am not sure that will ...

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Are you saying you would like us to evaluate it? I will add it to the list.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

It would be timely for us to look at how effective those measures are. They were quite different measures. This comes back to that cultural change within society as well, does it not, around which parent or whether both parents are going to share those parental responsibilities? It is bigger than the one piece of legislation and right across government working as well.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

There is some data that obviously holds on the movement of parents returning to work, so it captures parents who are still engaging with back-to-work services or have since been classed as a jobseeker from the previous September. Parents are categorised under the scheme. They put CT4, CT5 or CT12 based on the age of their youngest child with the income support household.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

That is around the number of hours that they are expected to work.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes. CT4 would be a child turning 4, where 15 hours of work is required. CT5 would be a child turning 5, where they are expected to do 25 hours and CT12, a child turning 12, where they are expected to do 35 hours.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Can you tell from that data, for example, how many dads versus mums are using parental leave?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

From what I have here, I do not have that data.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

Parental leave data, they are booking their leave with their employer, so while we might know about the primary carer, because the weeks are split, we will know for those that are claiming parental benefit, but what we do not know is how long they are then taking, perhaps, in addition. Because, of course, the right to take parental leave goes beyond the 32 weeks. It crosses over a 2-year period as well. Yes, again, we could probably get better data. It is one thing that I can follow up on as well with the team working on the transform programme around what data we can pick up as we improve our social security systems as well.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Yes. Anecdotally, we probably all know around the table that it is a lot more women than it is men. What is the Government doing to try to increase uptake of men in parental leave?

**The Minister for Social Security:**

I was talking about this with my officer earlier, around what we do know or do not know. Anecdotally, what we do not know still is whether men are taking the 6 weeks that they are entitled to. That is the starting point: are people taking their 6-week entitlement or are we in a stage culturally still where even though people might have an entitlement to 6 weeks paid parental leave, are they not taking it because ...?

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

How would you find that out?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

What we can do is look at different jurisdictions. When we did the consultation on the Employment Forum for what was right for Jersey, we looked at Scandinavian countries, as they are held up as a



positive marker for parental leave. What we found was when they made these changes decades ago it took a number of years for that cultural shift to take place. If you provide the mechanism then the cultural shift will follow, because people have the ability. It is not going to happen in months or years, it is more in terms of decades where you see that shift, where men expect that as part of what they are going to do is take on those parental responsibilities and take time out of work. They are more inclined to do that when they know it is not going to affect their career progression, because there are support mechanisms in place for both men and women to make sure that they are not disadvantaged by taking that time off to undertake childcare responsibilities.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

It ultimately comes back down to that awareness and education piece of work on people being made aware of what benefits they are entitled to and how and when they can take them. I had numerous constituents get in contact with me about the Community Cost Bonus, for example, which was never ... because it is not tied into Income Support, people did not realise that they were eligible for it.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

We are going to move on to Deputy Andrews now.

**Deputy M.B. Andrews:**

Thank you very much, Chair. I wanted to ask: what is the Government doing to support women who are currently financially independent on the state?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

We have the Income Support benefits.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Can you just describe what you mean by financially dependent on the state?

**Deputy M.B. Andrews:**

Yes, they are not economically active, they are not working full-time and they are relying on the Government to provide them with financial assistance, in terms of maybe covering their rent.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Assist with the back-to-work initiatives.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

If you are a primary carer then you get your home responsibility protection credits for your pension. We have recently made a change to that, so it also covers parental benefit as well. What I was

surprised to find out when I had a few cases come across my desk was that if people had a child fairly soon after one another, we had instances where people were not eligible for the second round of parental benefit, because they did not have contributions in the correct quarter. I have made a recent change to rectify that, so that will enable those people that were falling through that gap to get parental benefit where they would not have had previously. We obviously have income support, which is the general safety net for all Islanders. As Deputy Alves mentioned earlier, depending on the age of your child, there is a varying level of work that people are expected to look for. It varies from having very small children, no work, because you are undertaking care for that child then graduating when they get to school. I am always careful when people use the term “dependant on the state”, because that perpetuates the myth that there are a lot of people out there on income support not working. That is not the case. I want to make that absolutely clear. However, it is important that income support is also there to support people who wish to be able to be at home with their children at a critical stage in life, for them as well. Also, I am mindful of the work undertaken under Violence Against Women and Girls as well. I have made sure that anybody that is in a situation where they need to leave their domestic abuse situation will automatically get 12 weeks’ worth of income support without having to go and produce bank statements and types of documents that would be very difficult to get in that situation. The priority has to be, in that situation, to ensure the safety of the parent and the children involved and get them out of that domestic abuse situation as quickly as possible.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

To tag on to the end of that as well, the work permit policy as well has also recently been changed to enable those who may be in a bit of a vulnerable situation to be able to move jobs after 6 months, which they could not do before. That has been a change as well. They would be eligible for this support as well.

**Deputy M.B. Andrews:**

Thank you very much, Minister, for taking time to respond to my question. I wanted to know what work is being done to support those, especially single-parent households, who find themselves in that welfare trap where if they do try and enter the labour market they then would be worse off?

**The Minister for Social Security:**

Nobody would be worse off if they start working. If you are aware of a case where somebody is worse off then please send it to me. The way that income support is designed is that if you start working you will always be better off. When you describe “income support trap”, can you describe what you mean by that?

**Deputy M.B. Andrews:**

For instance, if somebody was to enter the labour market, they would see their income reduced and also there would potentially be support that would be withheld.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

No, that would not be the case. You would not get a case where somebody on income support would see their income reduced if they started work.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

The formula discounts a certain proportion of their income to ensure that that does not happen, basically.

**Deputy M.B. Andrews:**

Yes. It would be the case if somebody entered full-time employment and then circumstances have changed, so before if they were a single parent with a young child and they decided to take time out of the workplace to look after that child, if they were then to return to the workplace then what would their situation look like in terms of the Government providing support for that single parent?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

It depends on the age of the child.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

If the earnings are beneath the income support components, they will always pick up the income support. Then a portion of their earnings would always be disregarded. They will always be better off in that situation.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you. Deputy Doublet wants to slip back to the pension question.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Yes, thank you. In terms of gaps, there are indications that there is a wealth gap at retirement age between men and women. Can you talk about any work that has been done in this area or any data that you have on this?

**The Minister for Social Security:**

This is down as one of the next problems that we are solving, because we know that if you have lower income during your working life that is going to have a negative impact compared to other people that are earning more than you. The piece of work on secondary pensions, which will be picked up later on during this term, also need to tackle that issue. Still, people that can afford to

save into a secondary pension will be those that earn more; the more you are earning, the more you can afford to save. It is something that I think of quite a lot. It is on that list of problems, is it not?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes. We had a chat, myself and Ian, about that. It would require what is called a wealth survey.

**Chief Statistician:**

To address the data point, we have very little information on wealth. We run the Income Expenditure Survey which gives information on income, but of course that is quite different from wealth. Other jurisdictions run periodic wealth surveys, which are incredibly complex and resource intensive to run. Asking about income is difficult enough, because you have to get into savings and housing wealth and all that stuff. It basically is not something that we have. Obviously, there are some elements, Tax will know about the interest that you earning on savings. That is just the interest; it does not tell you what the level of the savings is. Bottom line, we have very little information on wealth.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Okay, thank you. Another group of Islanders ... sorry, I am going to ask about 2 groups of Islanders. In terms of meaningful data on ethnicity and disability status of government employees, this was something referred to in the comments to P.13, can you give an update on the collection of data in that area, please?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

The People's Services business plan for 2025 states: "We will educate, support and build the capability of leaders to ensure D.E.I. is part of our way of working. This will enable us to build a culture of trust which facilitates people to speak up and feel safe." The objective is to collect additional workforce data, including at the recruitment stage, to better understand the composition of our current workforce and prioritise initiatives that would enhance inclusion, belonging, recognising that. Inclusive services obviously stem from an inclusive workplace. There is a number of working groups and initiatives within government. We have a Flexible Working and Parental Leave Advocacy Group. There are workshops that are delivered on bias and allyship. There is flexible and hybrid working, Women in Leadership engagement events. There are also numerous awareness sessions and educational resources on disability, menopause, mental health, neurodiversity and ethnicity.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

In a previous hearing with the chair's panel in July last year, it was noted that discussions had begun with Statistics Jersey about the potential use of existing data and creating datasets around some of these groups. Can you update on that work, please?

[17:15]

**Chief Statistician:**

Within the new H.R. (human resources) Connect People systems, there is a section where you can fill in diversity information. I have supported the H.R. teams to come up with questions that are consistent with the census, so that you could compare the distribution in the Government of Jersey against the Island as a whole. That now exists in the H.R. systems in a way they did not exist before. It is relatively recently, towards the end of last year. I do not know the uptake of that. I suspect at the moment it is fairly low.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

It is not compulsory?

**Chief Statistician:**

It is not compulsory at the moment.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Is it voluntary?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes. For new recruitment, it is being collected, but we have people that have been in the system for a long time.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

When you have that data, how will you use that to tackle any ethnicity or disability gaps?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

That is where the working groups come in and those initiatives around raising awareness and having those additional resources like education and awareness sessions.

**Chief Statistician:**

The U.K. civil service has been doing this for about 15 - 20 years. My experience there was that, as I said, you could then compare the distribution by age, sex, ethnicity, disability against the

population as a whole and starting asking questions about why ethnic groups or women are under-represented at the most senior levels. You can start to get into those kinds of questions.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Can I ask the Ministers: is your work, in terms of diversity equity and inclusion, informed by an understanding of intersectionality, people that may have 2 or more of those characteristics and how they might be impacted?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes, I would say it is. Yes, definitely.

**The Minister for Social Security:**

Certainly, whenever we discuss the gender pay gap I always raise the ethnicity pay gap and the disability pay gap as well. When we are looking at datasets and information, we need to consider that and we need to consider that people may have multiple protected characteristics and are likely to suffer even worse. I am always conscious, as well, around the work that we do with our Disability Inclusion Team in Government as well. We do have a priority as well looking at transitions into adulthood as well. Again, that will pick up around career opportunities and workplace opportunities as well.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

I am going to hand you over to Deputy Renouf now. We are coming to the end of our time.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

Having a look at the question of occupational segregation and the fact that different occupations will tend to favour different sexes for various historical reasons and so on, I wondered what work is being undertaken, if any, to address gender pay gaps that result from this.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

It is a massive societal piece of work, is it not? We need to be cognisant of that impact. There is not anything as such ... obviously within Government there are things that we are doing, but there is only so far we can reach out with that.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

What sorts of things are you doing in government?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

One of the positive things that we are doing is a Board Apprenticeship Scheme. That is directed predominantly at women, to get women who work for government to spend time on boards. The whole point of that is that they work for a year on a board in their free time or they can use a bit of their work time to do it, and it allows them to gather the skills that they need to understand how a board operates. So when opportunities, managerial jobs, come up they have a better understanding of how those mechanisms work and have more opportunities to go for those higher paid jobs.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

There are mentoring schemes as well. There are some sessions around confidence building and leadership running through May and December, as well as some inspirational talks. It is called the i.W.I.L.L. (Inspiring Women into Leadership and Learning) Network.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

We have touched on the result of gender norms and historical things and so on. Given that gender norms and expectations influence educational and career pathways, contributing to occupational segregation, what work is being undertaken across education and industry to address these kinds of influences?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Schools are more open to inviting people in to talk about their careers. We are welcoming that. There are the career fairs as well. All the schools across the Island have the opportunity to go to those as well. Ensuring that our education, from the Curriculum Council, for example, anything that may need to be adapted and changed to ensure that we are as inclusive as possible. There have also been, in the past, things around the S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) subjects. I remember training in C.A.M.E. (Cognitive Acceleration in Mathematics Education) and C.A.S.E. (Cognitive Acceleration in Science Education) programmes to ensure that we got students involved in that. Role models play a big factor in this. That is where we need to ensure that schools are open to having people coming in and talking.

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

What consideration has been given to the labour market mobility of women relative to men?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

I am sorry, can you elaborate on that a little bit?

**Deputy J. Renouf:**

Women getting stuck in particular jobs, men being able to move faster, that kind of thing.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

That comes back to some of the work the Minister was talking about, ensuring that job descriptions, the salary transparency and around benefits as well. Sometimes it is not always clear when you go for a job what benefits and whether there is flexible working and all of those things. That probably needs to come from the Jobs in Jersey section, that we start to push that with private businesses. Also, making women aware that there is the chance that you can change, it is doable.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Thank you. I am very conscious of time. I have a couple of final questions and then the opportunity for the panel to ask any more. Has any consideration been given to the impact that fiscal policies have on gender income inequality at all?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes. From what I have understood from our economic colleagues, it is not completely clear that narrowing the pay gap would automatically grow the economy. The reality is that this would probably act more as a transfer rather than an increase in actual demand and growth. There would be economic benefits, but the growth element, according to our economic colleagues, is overstated. There is little evidence that the gender pay reporting has worked in other jurisdictions as such. The Economics Unit has speculated whether there could be more innovative solutions that the Island could take up to help narrow the gap.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

It is an interesting perspective. It is a shame the economist is not here.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Maybe you could write to us.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Yes. What consequences do you think Jersey's external reputation might have if we do not do more to narrow our gap? I ask that question specifically because of the answer you have given previously.

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

Yes, there is a reputational risk there. We need to be seen as a place where people from around the world want to come and work and live, because they know that, yes, we are more than a jurisdiction.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**



Given the issues that have arisen during this hearing, ranging from data gaps to structural barriers, et cetera, I do want to thank you for a very open and interesting conversation across your team. Can you outline for us what you think will happen next or what should happen next?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

With regards to our 3 priorities or in general?

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

In terms of a focused way of continuing to reduce this gender pay gap, with or without legislation.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Getting that framework and guidance in place is imperative. If we can continue that positive relationship with private businesses to ensure that we are all on the same page and that what we have can be endorsed by us as well and supported by us. We can then be much more public and forthcoming about saying: "We want you to publish it and this is the guidance and this is the framework we would like you to follow."

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Are there any actions that you are specifically ruling out at this stage?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Legislating is the one.

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

Yes.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Okay. Does the panel have any further final questions?

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

To return to the parental leave questions, Government has quite a well-established and generous parental leave policy that is equitable for both men and women. Is that something that is staying as it is? Has it been reviewed at all, either to look at extending it or reducing it?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

It is not going to be reduced. It is considered to be quite a generous scheme. That is because we do take the whole issue seriously and we want to support parents as much as we can. We want to

make sure that people who are away for any period of time are not disadvantaged and can still grow within the service. It is deliberately made far more generous than most other employers in Jersey.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

There are no plans to reduce it?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

Not that I know of, no.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Excellent. The parental leave weekly payment that can be claimed from Social Security, some employers choose to take that off the payment while a member of staff is still receiving payment. It is my understanding that for government members of staff it was not previously removed from their salary. Has there been a policy change there?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

That is right. Yes. Generally speaking, it is similar to a sickness pay cheque where the money goes to the employer and the employer continues to pay the full salary to the employee, whereas government employees were, in effect, getting both. I believe that has been rectified and pared down.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

You say “rectified”; many private companies, particularly those linked to the U.K., would have done the same. That was a well-established government policy. Can you let us know when it changed, please?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

I cannot remember off the top of my head, but I can check that for you, yes.

**Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:**

Okay, thank you.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

I have been interested to hear about the voluntary reporting work, which reflects part of the proposition that I lodged, which, as you know, was opposed by Government. However, it seems that there has been a change of heart and some progress made there. One element of that proposition, which again was opposed, but I would like to ask you again now today: are you going

to set a date whereby you will call on companies to voluntarily report that there is a voluntary date at the very least that companies are encouraged to report? When might that date be?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

We would have to wait and see until we got the framework and the guidance in order to be able to set a date. We do not want to set companies up to fail, so we need to know how much time. Once we have that guidance and framework, I am sure we can ...

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

You did say you would have the framework by the end of the year.

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

That is what we are hoping for, yes.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Is it possible that, for example, by International Women's Day next year you might be able to say: "Here is some guidance, please publish voluntarily"?

**Assistant Chief Minister (2):**

It is a target date.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Is that something we can aim for?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes. Nathan, you said the framework and the guidance would be done by the end of this year, hopefully.

**Associate Director, Justice Policy:**

Certainly, yes, that is very much our intention. What the snapshot date will be for reporting purposes might be a matter more of ruthless efficiency than picking a selective date. Yes, certainly there will be a date. I hope there will be a date in 2026.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Okay. There will be a date where there will be a clear message from government and a request to voluntarily report on that date?

**Assistant Chief Minister (1):**

Yes.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Okay, that is great news. Thank you.

**Deputy H.M. Miles:**

Okay, look at that, 5.30 p.m. on the dot. Once again, thank you very much for attending today and for being open and honest in your answers and a good discussion. I declare this meeting closed.

[17:30]