

STATES OF JERSEY

OFFICIAL REPORT

TUESDAY, 30th JUNE 2026

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[9:30]

The Roll was called and the Dean led the Assembly in Prayer.

APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS, COMMITTEES AND PANELS - resumption

1. The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development

The Bailiff:

We return to the appointment of Ministers, and the next matter is selection of the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development. Senator Farnham, would you like to make your nomination for this post?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Yes, Sir. Deputy Gerald Voisin has previously served in the Assembly, and served as president of the Economic Development Committee between 2002 and 2005. I am very pleased to nominate him for the role of Minister for Sustainable Economic Development.

The Bailiff:

Is the nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations?

Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement:

I would like to nominate Deputy Tadier. Deputy Tadier has served as the chair of the Economic and International Affairs Committee and, in my view, has a sound understanding of the economic agenda ahead of us.

The Bailiff:

Is the nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations? No? As we have 2 nominations, as Members will know, the procedure is now for Deputy Tadier to withdraw from the Chamber for the period of the speech and questions to Deputy Voisin, and I invite him to do so. Deputy Voisin, you now have 10 minutes to make a speech to Members, followed by up to 20 minutes of questions.

1.1 Deputy F.G. Voisin of St. Helier North:

I would like to thank Senator Farnham for putting his confidence in me, and I hope that I can convince the rest of the Assembly to also put their confidence in me. I could spend my 10 minutes talking about how we need to support our financial services industry by delivering on the Time to Win programme, talk about the importance of our visitor economy and how we need to support it, and the positive impact that it has on our society. I could talk about the importance of our air and sea links, and how we need to look again at the ferry service agreement. All these are important issues and do need attention. But what I am compelled to speak about today is our whole Island economy; each and every industry sector. According to Statistics Jersey, our Island economy has seen virtually zero economic growth since 2000. As a result of this, since 2001, our real average earnings have increased by zero. The point is that economic growth matters. The biggest factor for Islanders feeling under financial pressure, not having any money left at the end of the month, is that the economy has not grown and average earnings have not increased by more than inflation. Taxes have increased over the last 20 years but not earnings. This is why Islanders feel worse off, because many are, and this is why the electorate is so fed up with us in the Assembly. The key issue at the last election was the cost of living in Jersey and the need to make our Island more affordable. If we had achieved just ½ the average earnings increase that was achieved in the 1990s over the last 20 years, then the real median average wage would be £7,000 more than it is today. Let me put that in basic language. Our failure in here has cost people out there £7,000 a year. Economic growth matters. We owe it to Islanders to grow our economy for a more prosperous future for everyone. We need to allow our

people to earn a pay rise. Now it is easy to say let us grow the economy but it is much more difficult to achieve, and many countries in the E.U. (European Union) are struggling with the same problem. However, we have many strengths to build upon. We are politically stable, we have a respected legal system, sound-ish public finances, internationally recognised financial services, and a skilled workforce. Building upon this, my strategic vision for Jersey's economy is one where we are innovative, competitive, we encourage entrepreneurs, and we are outward-looking to build an export-based economy to supplement our local economy. It is likely these exports will be based on knowledge services and creativity that are enabled through technology and exported via our excellent connections to the rest of the world. To achieve this, we must change the framework and rules within which our businesses operate. I will be working with the new Minister for Planning and Regulation to speed up decision-making and delivery, remove barriers and controls, many of which have already been identified. I want to work with industry sectors to identify further barriers and blockages. I promise not to repeat the mistakes of past Ministers for Economic Development, both in Jersey and Europe, and draw up ambitious plans on the premise that they are in charge of the economy. They are not. It is the business leaders and entrepreneurs that drive an economy, create growth, diversification, not governments. This is particularly important today, as we are on the cusp of the next industrial revolution where the pace of technological change means that learning has become a lifelong necessity, not an optional extra. Artificial intelligence, automation and digital transformation will reshape our economy and many jobs surprisingly quickly. Some roles will disappear, many more will change, and entirely new careers will emerge that do not exist today. We cannot foresee the extent that our economy will change, nor what the winners and losers will be. This is why we need our economy to be flexible and able to more easily adapt to change. Our responsibility is not to fear or resist change. Our responsibility is to prepare our workforce to succeed within it. That means investing in digital skills. I was interested to see that Skills Jersey had been transferred out of Economic Development, and I believe there is a case to bring it back; although I was pleased to hear the comments of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning on developing skills. I see an enormous task in retraining our people to use artificial intelligence as a tool to improve productivity and remain relevant in a competitive market. Often those in Government do not understand that our economy is about people; people making decisions about whether to participate or not, whether to invest or not, whether to lend or not. These decisions are influenced by the way that Government behaves. Do we encourage? Do we give entrepreneurs confidence? Are we pro-growth? Unfortunately, this key element has been missing for several years now as we have over-regulated and tried to control. We have been acting in a manner that drains confidence from businesses and entrepreneurs in Jersey and those seeking to come here. This must change. We need to re-establish the trust that must exist between businesses and Government that will allow confidence to grow and investment to flow. My job, as your Minister for Sustainable Economic Development, is to build on this confidence and to create the environment for businesses to flourish, for entrepreneurs to see opportunity rather than risk.

[9:45]

To create this environment, in addition to the Minister for Planning and Regulation, I will be working closely with the Minister for Social Security, the Minister for International Affairs, the Minister for Treasury and Resources on taxation and the Minister for Housing. Housing and the high cost of housing remains a key economic issue that we need to resolve. The high cost reduces labour mobility, hinders recruitment, pushes out our young local people and discourages entrepreneurs. As an Assembly, we need to make progress on housing and the cost of housing in the next 4 years. We owe it to the people of Jersey. While I am talking about housing, I would like to stress that the strategic positioning outlined a few moments ago of encouraging innovation, competitiveness, entrepreneurs, and export-based economy is about creating businesses owned by people living in Jersey and employing people in Jersey. As you know, our tax system is largely based on taxing wages of people here, and it is important that ownership is retained by directors in Jersey so that

dividends can be taxed. In general, a business owned by a Jersey resident will pay more tax to Jersey than one owned by a person or corporation outside of the Island. Again, we need to encourage ownership to be retained in Jersey. In the coming weeks and months, I expect there will be many actions, decisions, and some Propositions that will cause debate, possibly even surprise. What I ask of every Member here is to recognise that if we are to deliver meaningful economic growth, if we are able to give our people on the median wage their £7,000 pay increase, we need to change. We need to do things differently and we need to do it at pace. If we do not change, we cannot expect a different outcome, we cannot expect meaningful economic growth. But we can do this. So let us embrace change together. With courage and determination, we can create a brighter future for the people of Jersey. [Approval]

The Bailiff:

We now move to a period of questions. The first question is from the Connétable of St. Martin.

1.1.1 Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin:

Does the candidate think that the current arrangements for the distribution of the one per cent for arts adequately support the heritage and cultural sector as a whole, particularly relating to grassroots organisations? I know that it was particularly challenging to secure a grant of £10,000 for the Design Code for Gorey - I am talking about St. Martin securing that money, and I thank the former Minister - while arm's length organisations receive multi-million-pound grants.

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, obviously the Opera House does take up a large part of that grant, and it is nice to see that they produced a surplus last year. There are a proliferation of organisations. When I had a briefing with the Chief Officer, I was surprised at the length and breadth of the organisations that we support, and it is something that I will have to get to grips better.

1.1.2 The Connétable of St. Martin:

I thank the candidate for his answer. Would he be open to establishing an arts heritage and culture working group to allow Members across the Assembly to help develop a policy and funding opportunities for the sector?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I like the phrase "funding opportunities" because that implies that it is not just coming from Government. I think that is something that I would like to discuss with you after the Assembly meeting. I think that is a very good idea, also to involve more Members of the Assembly in making the decision as to where these funds are placed.

1.1.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John St. Lawrence and Trinity:

The Government has already invested public money to support the return of Bergerac to Jersey, with conditions attached around local economic benefits and apprenticeships. The U.K. (United Kingdom) screen industry is worth about £13 billion and continues to grow, and other smaller jurisdictions are starting to see the benefits of more co-ordinated training, bodies such as Screen Cornwall. Does the Minister believe Jersey is missing a genuine economic opportunity by not having a dedicated screen office or focus, and will he commit to assessing the case for one, whether such funding should be a catalyst for a wider-structured Screen Jersey strategy, for example?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Thank you for that question, Deputy Jeune. My understanding of Bergerac in particular, and other screen productions, is that they are often filmed and they go where the funding comes from. For example, if we had increased the funding available to the producers of Bergerac, then we would have had more of the series filmed in Jersey. As it was, we were not able to provide more so not as much

of the filming was done in Jersey. As far as establishing a screen committee or council, I think that ... I am certainly able to have a look at that, but I think a lot of that will be based down to funding. I know that it has been a challenge to find funding for the 2 Bergerac series that we have funded, so it is going to be a question of where the money is going to come from.

1.1.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think more the question is about diversification of the economy and the fact that there are a lot of people on the Island who are interested in developing films and TV series and advertisements here on the Island, and Bergerac was just one of the examples from outside, but there are a lot of other examples. Me focusing in on a Screen Jersey strategy would help understand a bit more what could happen here to help, especially those who want to diversify into this, and also advertise Jersey. I was wondering, especially as the candidate said about potential public-private funding, whether he would look into this more closely to see what it could look like as a potential economic opportunity to grow the economy in this area?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I would definitely look at that if we have an entrepreneur who is able to provide funding and the Economic Development Department are acting as enablers; that to me is an easy win. It may require some short-term funding from Government and, in that case, we would have to look at how we could divert funds from one area to another. But, yes, I am certainly very happy to look at that.

1.1.5 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

In his speech, the candidate spoke a lot about change but did not actually talk about what that change would be. I was wondering how he would act to change the fact that Jersey's business community does not reinvest in their businesses at a level that is sufficient for the Island's economy. How will he change that?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think that some business sectors do reinvest in their business. I know that the financial services sector invests heavily both in I.T. (information technology) and their infrastructure. I think you may be referring to ...

The Bailiff:

You must speak through the Chair; not "you", "Deputy Morel".

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think Deputy Morel may be referring to the accommodation sector, the hotel sector, and it is true that they have not been investing. The reason they have not been investing is because of decisions made by this Assembly that have severely curtailed their profitability, and there just is not the profit there available to invest. Part of the change that I would want to implement is to change those policies that have been inflicted on that sector and encourage them to invest. If they are making profits, then of course they will want to look after the asset that is being used to operate their business. But if there is no profit there, if profits are so low, then there will not be the money available to make investments. Also, if profitability is low, then lenders are reluctant to lend to them.

1.1.6 Deputy K.F. Morel:

My comment or my question comes from comments made by the Chief Economic Adviser on several occasions over the last few years where the entirety of Jersey's business community, perhaps excluding the financial services sector, does not have a high rate of reinvestment. So there is no one particular sector. I would ask again, what does the candidate believe is being done at the moment in this area and what will he do himself to change that fact?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think we need to look at the reasons why the investment is not made. The example I have given is where profitability is low, but if profitability is not then is it because businesses in Jersey do not have access to funds? I have heard that there are some businesses that struggle to find banks to lend to them, and that is something that can be looked at. Indeed there is a suggestion that investors put money into a special fund to lend money to businesses in Jersey, and that is something that I can certainly look at.

1.1.7 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South:

The candidate in his opening remarks said that Jersey had seen no real terms increase in earnings, however there was a report published by, and some Members of the Assembly might know this group, the Policy Centre, that showed that in 2025 that real terms increased by 1.4 per cent for the first time outstripping inflation. Will the candidate outline his vision to maintain this level of growth?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I can pass you the Statistics Jersey page which shows that our average earnings is actually very slightly below where we were in June 2001. The actions that I have outlined are basically my speech. We have got to work with businesses and industry sectors to allow them to operate their businesses. The Planning Department, in particular, is a hindrance that we need to deal with. For example, I know that there are plans to introduce a new hotel in the centre of town. It would be great if that approval could be granted quickly.

1.1.8 Deputy T.A. Coles:

The candidate mentions about barriers to business in his response, and obviously clearly mentions planning. Not every business in this Island needs planning permission to develop and maintain the business, will he therefore outline other barriers which are impeding businesses?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, the fact that businesses have to apply for licences to employ people, they have to apply for change of use, which again is a planning issue, and there are a number of licences that needs to applied for: liquor licences, licence under the financial services regulation. There is a proliferation of these things and they are outlined also in the *Barriers to Business* report that was issued by the Department for Economic Development last year I understand, or was it the year before?

1.1.9 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:

The candidate rightly highlighted the focus needed on knowledge-based industries in the digital economy. He did mention digital skills, so does he have other plans to specifically support the digital economy and does he consider the industry faces particular barriers to growth that Government can enable?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I do not really see the digital industry as an industry on its own, because everybody now is using digital technology. I do believe that we need to work with Digital Jersey. I understand that their funding was cut last year, and there is this important task of re-training large parts of our workforce. So this is an area where we need to work again and look again. This is also why I believe that there is some work to be done with Skills Jersey.

1.1.10 Deputy A.F. Curtis:

The candidate highlights that digital is prolific and prevalent in all industry, but how will he, in his work, articulate the difference between what he just said there, which is there is digitisation of

industries, and the areas he mentioned in his opening speech, the high-value export-based knowledge industries?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think this is where I would hope that entrepreneurs will come forward. I know that we already have a lot of marketing agencies in Jersey that work for businesses outside of the Island, and their work obviously is exported via our high-speed telecommunications systems. We also have traders that are working in Jersey for businesses owned elsewhere, and they do their work sometimes in the middle of the night because that is when the markets are open around the world. It is a question of allowing entrepreneurs to come to the Island and establish business and find new opportunities. That is why I think it is so important that we encourage these people to come here.

1.1.11 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South:

Over the last year, while I have been doing my work and looking at preparing for this Assembly, I have met several entrepreneurs - both large and small - who have failed in their attempts to set up businesses.

[10:00]

On the small end, it is often due to lack of finance, so I am encouraged by your comments about looking at solutions around that. But for high-net-worth entrepreneurs, it is often because they have just failed to get in contact, particularly in Government; not necessarily for States Members, but in the Civil Service people just are not getting back to them and they are encountering roadblocks. I am interested to know what the candidate would do to signpost more clearly and remove that as a barrier.

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think partly it is a question of talking to people. We do have Jersey Business, which is a great conduit for new ideas and people wanting to start up business. I think that is where a lot of these inquiries go, and that is where they can be captured. We can also understand what is holding these new businesses and projects back.

1.1.12 Deputy S.J. Gleave:

I note that in the *Time to Win* report, there is the idea of a sandbox fast-tracking things for the finance industry. Would the candidate potentially consider that for industries, for a separate sandbox-type idea to fast-track within potentially Jersey Business and make sure they are specialised for those more high-end entrepreneurs that are approaching Jersey?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Certainly Jersey Business can facilitate that, and I believe they do already. Also, Digital Jersey is about taking new ideas and implementing those and allowing people to experiment. I think that they are already there, but it is really important that we take new ideas and we try them, we test them. It is only by doing that that people know whether they are going to be a success or not. I think the key is that it has got to be at the risk of the entrepreneur. I do not think we can be risking government money in these things.

1.1.13 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier:

Town businesses, retail, hospitality, the markets, are the front line of the Island's economy and under real pressure. What will the candidate do to support St. Helier's commercial centre specifically, including footfall, alfresco trading, and night-time economy?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think if we want to get back to the buzz that St. Helier enjoyed many years ago we need to turn the clock back to when we had a million visitors coming to Jersey; I am afraid that is not going to happen. I think what we do need to do is to work with the visitor economy to recover them. I must say that the people in the visitor economy feel utterly betrayed by some of the decisions made by this Assembly. There is a big job to be done in rebuilding that trust with them. But it is the way of bringing people to Jersey that are going to fill St. Helier. We can also have regular events as well, and I believe that there is an area of my department that does that, and we can work with the Connétable of St. Helier. It is a question of some events, but also we need to rebuild our visitor economy so that people are coming to Jersey regularly, and we get more people here.

1.1.14 The Connétable of St. Helier:

Would the candidate share any specific views on night-time economy and al frescoes?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, sorry, I forgot to address that part of your question. I do think, and this may be controversial, but I do think we need to look again at the duty that is levied on alcohol. I understand that a great deal of evening entertainment has moved to home because alcohol is cheaper if you buy it from the supermarket then drink at home. That is putting people off coming out in the evening, enjoying a more social environment, and I think that is something that we should perhaps look at in the fullness of time.

1.1.15 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

I recently attended an excellent event organised by the I.o.D. (Institute of Directors) called Family Friendly, Profit-Friendly: The Talent Strategy that Businesses Need. Does the candidate agree with me that preventative health and family-friendly policies are economic investments, and will he expand on his thoughts on this area?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

It is all tied up in good employee relations, which I am all for. There is no doubt about it, that if you have a happy cohort of personnel, then they perform well for the business. I think we have also got to remember that people's lives change as we go through life. Our situations change, we have babies - well, some of us do - we have children, so there are different demands on parents during that time. The capacity for them to spend more time at work changes as we go through our career, and I think it is good that employers are able to be flexible with that.

1.1.16 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Will he commit to being a champion for this concept then that family-friendly can be profit-friendly, and working with other Ministers and businesses to enable progress in this area? For example, one request that was made at that event was for businesses to be enabled to be able to set up things like after-school clubs and others; actually, some of it is the regulation that is challenging to allow that to happen. This seems to be an example of something that would fit within the things that the Deputy outlined in his speech.

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, I would be very happy to look at that. After-school care is very important for parents that sometimes have to leave work early to pick their children up from school. But can I just add also that I do think that we need to look at trying to support parents better when they have children after the first year or so. I think childcare cuts in after the third year, and we need to bring that forward so that parents can get back to work sooner without incurring the massive costs that they do.

The Bailiff:

I am going to prioritise the members who have not asked a question so far, so the next question ... there is only a minute left. Deputy Raimondo, do you have a short question for the candidate?

1.1.17 Deputy G.A. Raimondo of St. Brelade:

I will make it quick. Many young people leave the Island for university and do not come back because they cannot find a job in the sector that they have studied at university. Can I ask the Deputy how we can look at growing job opportunities in Jersey in sectors such as tech, biotech and the creative arts?

The Bailiff:

You have 28 seconds.

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think the answer is yes. The interesting thing is that the creative skills that we have in Jersey, we need to bring them back. Highlands College has a tremendous facility for training and educating media, and we need to give our Islanders the opportunity to come back to practice those skills in Jersey.

The Bailiff:

That concludes your 20 minutes. Can I invite you now, please, to leave the Chamber, Deputy Voisin? Perhaps someone can bring back Deputy Tadier. Deputy, when you are ready, you can commence your address to Members.

1.2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I am never exactly comfortable reading out a pre-prepared speech, even when it is one that I have written, so I am going to start just with a few opening remarks that I thought about on my way here this morning. It was a few months ago now, well before the election had started, I was at one of these events where you get chatting, you make small talk, and one of the questions from somebody next to me was: "Well, what do you think is the most important issue facing Jersey? What is the biggest challenge to Jersey at the moment?" and I came out with the usual political answers: "Well, actually I think it is probably housing but certainly the economy as well", and I turned to the other person next to me, who I will not mention his name but he is well-known, and I said: "What do you think is the biggest challenge?", and he said: "I think it is complacency." It gave me a new way to think of things. We immediately go to identify particular issues in terms of the concrete, but he was looking at the abstract. That certainly chimes, because in the last few months when I have been speaking to industry leaders in the economy, they say to me that one of the biggest challenges they think we have in Jersey is complacency, but it is also a lack of ambition. I think there is a concern that successive Governments have become paralysed, that they have been scared to take bold action. I think we need to look at that. The second thing I wanted to say is that people have asked me: "Why on earth would you want to go for this job? Do you think that you could work with this Council of Ministers?" I look across there and I say: "Actually, yes, I think I could." Because if I take what has been said over the last weeks and months of hustings that I have attended, both locally but also on the Senatorials, I heard a lot of positive energy there. I do not see, on further analysis, that the public were necessarily voting ideologically, but I think they were voting because they want to see people with vision and who want to get things done. Now, certainly for my part and for my party's part, we also share that vision, and it was included in our manifesto. It may well be that sometimes that message did not come across, but I am very excited about the possibility of working in one capacity or another with a group of people in this Assembly who also want to get things done. Now to the pre-prepared speech. First, I would like to thank the electorate of St. Brelade for putting their trust in me and giving me the mandate to serve here in this Assembly for a further term. I would also like

to congratulate the new Members. I look forward to working with them and getting to know them. For those Members who do not know me already, I have not always worked in politics. I graduated from university in Sheffield with a degree in modern languages, and before coming into this Assembly at the age of 29 I had already run my own business, I had lived and worked abroad in places as far afield as Martinique and La Réunion, and worked in tourism and telecommunication roles in Jersey. Throughout those experiences, one thing has remained constant for me. I have always tried to promote what is good about Jersey and to help build a stronger, more vibrant and diverse Island. Why? Because I want to live here. I want Jersey to be interesting, and I think we all want that for the Island. But the economy is not just about money, it is about people. It is about what makes society generally and our community more specifically tick. Because of this, we must always remember to put people at the heart of everything we do. Again, why am I standing today to become the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development? Well, there are a number of reasons. Firstly, I believe that Jersey needs a bolder vision for its economy. Secondly, I believe that we should always be thinking about what drives economic growth, not just for the next Budget or the next political term, but for future generations. We should not be simply asking ourselves what is going to happen in 2030, we need to be asking what kind of Island do we want to leave for future generations? What will the Island look like in 2080? Finally, I believe in democracy. As in the marketplace, competition is healthy. Members deserve the opportunity to choose between different visions and perhaps different leadership styles before making their decision today. Over the past 2½ years, I have had the privilege of chairing the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel. I thank my team; we are not the panel anymore but I am glad to see that they have made a return to the Assembly. I think there is even one watching in the gallery, if I am not mistaken. We were a very busy panel. We produced over 40 comments papers. We took in-depth reviews. We carried out the detailed scrutiny that you would expect of us, that tried to facilitate better Government decision-making. I would like to use that experience and that work ethic now in Government. If elected today, I can assure Members that I will be a full-time Minister committed to this job. But the role is not just about administering a department. What we expect from the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development is a champion for the wider economy. As somebody might well say, we have all got to be a champion for team Jersey. I want to acknowledge at this point the work of the previous Minister - he used to sit here incidentally - who I believe sought to do exactly that; to support traditional industries and to seek to help to foster innovation.

[10:15]

Like me, Deputy Morel is a fluent French speaker, and I hope that we will continue to work together to advocate for closer working relationships with France and our European neighbours in a post-Brexit world. I do not think we can underestimate the importance of that, both from an economic point of view but from a soft power point of view as well. I would also like to acknowledge the success of the Better Business Support Package, which was brought forward by Deputy Morel and his team, and what we see there is, I believe, a contract between Government and the private sector. We have seen examples of this in the past where Government is prepared to put its hand in its pocket and say: “We see that there are issues, there is not enough investment going back into businesses. If you will invest 50 per cent of your own money, then we will do the same for you.” That is when businesses respond, and it has been an overwhelming success. Another example that we have seen of that was during my time when I was at Culture, I brought the 1 per cent in for arts. I have resisted several attempts to try and get rid of that, but we also see the stimulation and the encouragement that can give to a sector when Government is prepared to do its part. I guess where we risk running out of time, I want to get to the nub of my vision for Jersey. When I talked about that we need to be bold, one idea that has really captured my imagination, I do not claim to have conceived of it myself, but this is a good example of the fact that good ideas can come from anywhere in society and indeed anywhere in this Assembly. It is the idea that we need to very much be concentrating on higher education in the future. I know that there are Senators who have just recently been elected for the

first time and others who have also espoused this vision. Why is it such a good idea for Jersey to start investing in becoming what I would like to say is a university town? I think it has got real potential, first of all because a big barrier to businesses at the moment is the lack of human capital. We know that we have an ageing population. That, on the one hand, is something we can celebrate - there is a lot of knowledge and wisdom that is contained within that - but we will be needing people to do the jobs. If you look at university towns throughout the U.K., throughout the world, they are centres of vibrancy. Many of our own students from Jersey who traditionally go to U.K. universities will stay there for a little while, they may even end up living there. That was certainly the case in Sheffield where a lot of my friends, not necessarily from Jersey, stayed on and they made it their home, but they will come back to Jersey and bring ideas. What if people stayed in Jersey in the first place? What if we imported students from other countries, from the U.K., from Europe, from Asia, to come and work in Jersey? They would have to do things in the evenings, they would want to be creative. They would also want to do things in the summer and many of them would stay in Jersey, raise the families, pay the taxes that we need them to do. It is not just about the economy, it is also about the wider fringe benefits. We should also not be shying away from other areas of the economy such as renewable energy. I think the wind farm is something we should not shy away from. Ultimately it will depend on whether it is economically viable, it would depend on access to markets, but it has a huge potential to be an income stream for Jersey and to create jobs and expertise. It is where everything is going anyway; it will put us in a good place within the region. The last area, because I cannot cover everything today, I have been reminded - some other Members will have received the email - is the huge potential that Jersey could have, it is certainly worth exploring, in developing its film industry. There was a paper that was commissioned by Economic Development in the last 2 or 3 years which was called *Screen Jersey*. That document has now been parked. They asked somebody to do a research paper into it, they have come back and they have come up with a viability scheme for developing the next stage. We have seen the success of Bergerac. I will leave those comments there and I look forward to Members' questions.

The Bailiff:

We now move on to the period of questions, and the first question is from Deputy Ferey.

1.2.1 Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour:

As I found out in the last Government, being a member of a party and being in Government can produce tensions. Being a member of a party himself, how would the candidate square those 2 competing demands?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Well if the Member is willing to vote for me, then I will certainly be able to tell him in a few months' time. [Laughter]

1.2.2 Deputy M.R. Ferey:

But can he think of any particular instances where he would have a conflict with party loyalty and Government progression?

Deputy M. Tadier:

We are all members of parties. The Member who is asking the question is a member of the Deputy Ferey Party. I am a member of Reform Jersey, there are others who stand under the *quasi* label of Value Jersey, which I hope does one day become a fully-fledged party because I think they have clearly got some support, they have got the numbers, and they just need now to have the transparency. We have all got something to contribute here and I think what we all get into politics for is to do a job. The people of St. Brelade did not simply elect me because I stood on a Reform Jersey ticket. Many people were not party supporters, but they put their faith in me to do a job. They put their faith

in all 49 of us to do a job, and I do not think any of us should shy away from doing that. There will be tensions, but tensions are what makes politics really interesting.

1.2.3 Deputy S.J. Gleave:

I am going to ask the same question that I asked to the previous candidate. Through my work and conversations over the last year, I have met several entrepreneurs, both small entrepreneurs who are blocked from obtaining finance and also larger entrepreneurs. Their issue is different, they often are blocked from conversations with predominantly civil servants, but they are coming across regulation that stops them operating. This is outside of finance; this is in other industries. What would the candidate suggest to do to provide better signposting and support for those entrepreneurs?

Deputy M. Tadier:

We have got to be clear and have those conversations about what it is that we expect governments to do. If there are, for example, startups who do not exist yet and have a business idea who cannot get private funding from banks, I think there are questions about whether or not Government needs to get involved with innovation funds, *et cetera*, that we have been stung with those in the past. I think that there should be mechanisms whereby ... that is exactly what the Better Business Support Package is; it is about helping businesses. We have got to steer away from Government trying to pick winners. I do not think that is something that Government could do, but it should not shy away from putting in appropriate investment. What I meant to answer in my original speech, and I am glad for the opportunity, is that the areas of return on investment and value for money, if those are the 2 guiding principles that Government has, especially in this department, I think we cannot go too far wrong in making sure that where we do give support that there is a corresponding reinvestment.

1.2.4 Deputy S.J. Gleave:

What about for the large entrepreneurs? With the *Time to Win* report, there is a regulatory sandbox that is being looked at. Would the candidate consider that same sort of sandbox idea for businesses that sit outside of finance?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes, the sandboxing or the providing a space where new ideas can be tested is really vital. That is something that, for example, I have discussed already with Digital Jersey. Jersey Business are also in that space. I think absolutely we cannot simply focus on finance but what does work for finance sometimes could be modelled and used in other industries.

1.2.5 The Connétable of St. Helier:

Town businesses, retail, hospitality, markets are the front line of the Island's economy and are under real pressure. What will the candidate do to support the St. Helier commercial centre specifically, including footfall, al fresco trading and night-time economy?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes, I think St. Helier has got great potential. There is already a good foundation there. Again I have been involved in my time in event-led tourism. I did not mention it earlier, but I created the Corn Riots Festival, which is now in its sixth year. I am Chair of the French Festival, which is a biennial festival which tries to bring vibrancy to St. Helier. The more we can do that ... I look outside at the Royal Square which used to be called Lé Vièr Marchi up until the 1800s. It was very much back then a bustling area which was for the people and of the people. It gradually became more gentrified. If that was a square that existed anywhere in France, we would find that at weekends it would be bustling, there would be al fresco dining, there would be live music that would be performing throughout the summer. If we can capture some of that perhaps European zest, and it is not exclusive to Europe, of course, then St. Helier would be a better place. It is about all of us coming out, enjoying St. Helier, spending our money there and supporting local businesses.

1.2.6 The Connétable of St. Helier:

Would the candidate specify what he would do to increase the footfall as practical steps in town and what his views are on the night-time economy?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes, I think we need more joined-up thinking. Jersey has fallen into a habit, it seems, of basically going to work and going home. The shops generally shut at 5.30 p.m., some things have become a bit too expensive, so first of all we need to make sure that people have got money in their pockets. I think that is where, again, the partnership between Government investment and businesses and paying people enough money so that they can spend it in the economy is really important too. It is about getting into that mindset where there are things to do in the evening. That goes back to the idea of how do we make St. Helier vibrant? It is a numbers game. If we had a younger demographic in town supported by a university that was present in St. Helier, I think there are number of things that would add to that footfall.

1.2.7 The Connétable of St. Martin:

I will ask the same question to both candidates. Does the candidate think that the current arrangements for the distribution of the one per cent for the Arts adequately support the heritage and cultural sector as a whole, particularly relating to grassroots organisations? I know that it was particularly challenging to secure a relatively small grant of £10,000 for the Design Code for Gorey while some arm's-length organisations are in receipt of multi-million pound grants.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes, the Member, who I know is a big supporter for arts and culture in Jersey, touches on something very fundamental here. It is not about just throwing money at the arts. There was an interesting period when the one per cent money came in there was a big uplift. Of course, the majority of that money does go to the 5 arm's-length organisations we have in that sector, which includes the recent addition of Ballet d'Jèrri. There was money that was being kept aside to use for projects in-house, but essentially I am quite uneasy with the fact that small projects or potential businesses needed to approach Government, and Government was the one opining on what and where to give that extra money. What I think we do not have at the moment is an Arts Council function in Jersey. That used to be with ArtHouse Jersey, and that is what we see in other jurisdictions in other countries. I think we probably need to look at that overarching structure of having an Arts Council in Jersey which can give money both to the A.L.O.s but also distribute it to those who just want to start up either a one-off event or to create a new festival, for example.

1.2.8 The Connétable of St. Martin:

Therefore, with his answer, would the candidate be open to establishing an Arts Heritage and Culture working group to allow Members across the Assembly with skills to help to develop policy and funding opportunities for the sector?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I am open to all of those ideas. What I am not going to do is just suggest that we create new structures, but I am more interested in what the output of those would be, whether it is an Arts Council, whether it is a working group in the States Assembly. Incidentally, something that we should already be doing and that we can do is having cross-working groups in the Assembly, all-party parliamentary groups, so to speak, which show an interest and could support the work in the economy. I think that ought to be supported.

1.2.9 Deputy K.F. Morel:

I would have asked the same questions I asked the previous candidate but Deputy Gleave has gone there already, so I will have to ask a different question. I was wondering if the candidate would say how would he enable the interface between Government and the business community? One of the takeaways I have had from the past 4 years is that Government is not very good at speaking the same language as the business community. I was wondering how he would change that.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I remember a saying that I heard Deputy Ozouf use about probably 18 years ago now when I was new to the Assembly, saying that you do not have a dog and bark. It seems that we have got lots of dogs in Government but that we like to do a lot of the barking ourselves. I think of organisations like Digital Jersey, I think of other organisations like Business Jersey. Or Jersey Business, I sometimes get the order wrong. They are presumably set up to do certain jobs, but Government also seems to want to try and do the same jobs in-house. I think we need to have that conversation of why we are setting up some of these organisations. We could go on, we could talk about States of Jersey Development Company, Property Holdings, Andium, *et cetera*. I think there is room for rationalisation in that area, but to make sure that somebody is doing the work. I am not hung up on whether it is done in-house or out of house, I just want things to get done.

1.2.10 Deputy K.F. Morel:

It is good to hear that he wants things to get done. I agree that being out of house is probably better than in-house. He mentioned rationalisation, would he explain what he may do with regard to such rationalisation?

[10:30]

Deputy M. Tadier:

Well I think we need to speak to businesses, find out what works and what does not work, so we need to get that feedback. It is not just a case of putting these schemes in place, we need to be asking them: "How was your experience in that?" This is something that goes right across Government. We need to be customer-focused. Whether the customer is the individual citizen or whether it is the business user, we need to listen to what works, what does not work, and then be willing to change. I think that is all I can say.

1.2.11 Deputy A.F. Curtis:

The candidate will know from his work on the Economic and International Affairs Panel the focus needed on the knowledge based in digital economy. Does he have plans or a vision to support the digital economy and does he consider that the industry face any particular barriers to growth that Government can enable?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes, absolutely, that was in my original speech. The lesson is, do not deviate too much from your speech with lengthy preambles. It is absolutely correct, the digital economy is vital because it allows for flexibility and working. We all know that people who do not live in Jersey can still work in or for Jersey companies. They can be working on their own and people can be based in Jersey here working but doing work all across the world. I think we do have to recognise the fact that we have made the infrastructural investments. Jersey has got excellent fibre still and excellent connectivity. It has also got an excellent knowledge base here. Absolutely we do need to look to the future because digital is going to be increasingly important. People even our age - I do not want to look too much at the Deputy, he is younger than I am - but it is easy to get left behind if we are not keeping up to date with the latest education and technology.

1.2.12 Deputy C.J. Rebindaine of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

The labour market is a critical factor in the operation of most businesses. Does the candidate have a view on how we ensure the Island is organised so whichever business we are talking to, be it construction, hospitality, finance, retail, agriculture, they can access workers whose pay and conditions make them a valuable resource and not an uneconomic luxury?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I get where this question is coming from. I do get slightly uneasy when I hear language like “accessing workers”. We are talking about real people here, so I do not like this idea that there is just a commodity that we import like any other commodity. People traditionally have come to Jersey for generations. My great grandparents were some of those who came to work in Jersey, so it needs to start with a respectful tone. I am not suggesting that was not, but the underlying point is a correct one, we need systems in place that work both for businesses and for the individuals who want to come and work here. I have mentioned to other politicians casually that America, for all its faults, is well-known for having something called the “American Dream” and I think we need to have something called the “Jersey Dream”. I have also put in my notes that the Fort Regent analogy is just one that keeps giving. Fort Regent was built to keep people out and it is still doing a really good job today. It is the same with our Housing and Work Law. It was from a time in the 1960s and 1970s where we wanted to stop people coming to Jersey. We now need people to come here, and we really need to be rolling the red carpet out. Yes, for businesses, but also to young people, to families, to people who have got something, and say to them: “If you do come to Jersey, you can have a job. You can have a good quality of life and you will be allowed to stay here.” We cannot simply keep on putting all these restrictions. If I may, I know I am probably going over time, the 9-month restriction on seasonal workers is probably a very good example. It often does not work for hotels, it often does not work for the individuals themselves. I will look to probably abolish that straightaway and let those people stay in Jersey to work here, and there are other things that we also need to do.

1.2.13 Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

I wonder what the candidate’s stance is on making the living wage also being the minimum wage.

Deputy M. Tadier:

So the question is: if the living wage is not the same as the minimum wage, what should the difference be? I think if we are suggesting that it should not be the case, how low should the minimum wage be allowed to be below the living wage for it to be ethical or even economically viable? That is the question I would put back to the Member, is that I do not see a case for any discrepancy. We need to be working to a point where the living wage is the same as the minimum wage so everyone can live by earning the minimum wage. Then what we need to do is think about continuing that package, the contract between Government. It was this previous Government in working and listening to all the voices around the table that recognised, in the same way that I think the car builder Ford did, that unless you pay your workers good wages, they cannot afford to live in a society that you live and work in and buy your own products.

1.2.14 Deputy L.D. Carpenter of St. Helier Central:

My original question has just been asked so I will ask the candidate, what specific ideas does the candidate have around tourism?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think we have got to be bold, we cannot throw the baby out with the bathwater. We have got to recognise that Visit Jersey does a great job. The first thing that I would say is that Visit Jersey has not had its baseline funding increased since its inception in 2015. I think in 2015 the Government grant was some £4.5 million, £4.6 million, and in 2026 it is still £4.6 million. There is a top-up grant

that we give to them but we seem to like to keep some of our essential A.L.O.s in poverty so that they have to constantly come back cap in hand. I think the first thing to do is reset that baseline to make sure that Visit Jersey is adequately funded so that they can do their job. Partly, I am minded to say we should just let them do the job, but I did have a conversation with the Chief of Visit Jersey just last week. There are both big things and small things that I think we can do. If that was the question that maybe the Member wants to ask in his supplementary, I would be happy to answer it.

The Bailiff:

A supplementary?

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

No, Sir. [Laughter]

1.2.15 Deputy G.A. Raimondo:

Young people at the moment leave our Island in massive numbers and it is unsustainable. We cannot get them back here because we simply do not have the job sector. When they go to university and get degrees, those degrees cannot be used here. How does the Deputy plan to expand job opportunities in the Island to suit university degrees?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Now that I have been elected, I am going to give a slightly more open answer and unpopular answer, is that we should not always be obsessed about getting young people back to Jersey. Some people come, some people go, and that has always been the way in Jersey. Fifty per cent of Jersey's population was not born here and sometimes it is good to go away and get ideas. People do settle all across the world; living in a small Island is not for everybody. What I do agree, I think, with the Member and where he is coming from is that we should not be forcing anyone out of Jersey because there is not enough vibrancy, because there are not enough job opportunities or because the cost of living here is too high. We do very much need to take that holistic approach I described earlier to make sure that the Jersey of 30 or 50 years' time is somewhere where people want to live, where they want to bring up families or they just want to contribute even on their own. I think the more opportunities we can provide for them to do that in a vibrant economy is more likely to stop people leaving for those reasons.

1.2.16 Deputy G.A. Raimondo:

We do see increasing amounts of young people leave the Island and often it is not because they want to leave the Island but because they cannot survive here. Housing is often blamed for this and in reality I do not think it is down to housing, I think it is down to job opportunity. I hear that every time I speak to a young person, so I do believe there is an issue there. I do ask the Deputy again, which job sectors could we look at bringing in that would suit university degrees?

Deputy M. Tadier:

I do not fully agree with that; I think it depends on the age. I think very young people who are maybe 18, 20 decide that they want to leave maybe for job opportunities but the slightly older generation who have done their education and come back to Jersey, it is the cost of housing that puts them off because we have a full employment market. There may not be the vibrancy and the diversity of jobs that other places can offer, but it is very much the cost of housing that puts people off. I know that is something that indeed Senator Kersten very much recognised in her speeches throughout the Senatorial hustings, is that young people are leaving the Island because of the cost of living but they cannot buy houses here. I think it is not an either/or but I am open to following up those discussions with all Members.

The Bailiff:

That brings that period of questions to an end and I would invite someone to find Deputy Voisin and bring him back.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Could I raise the défaut on Deputy Doublet, please?

The Bailiff:

Are Members content to raise the défaut? The défaut is raised. Members are invited to return to their seats. The Greffier will open the voting in a moment. Any Member wishing to vote for Deputy Voisin should press the pour button. Any Member wishing to vote for Deputy Tadier should press the contre button. Members may abstain in the usual way, if they wish to do so. I ask the Greffier to open the voting. If all Members have had the opportunity of casting their votes, I ask the Greffier to close the voting.

Deputy F.G. Voisin of St. Helier North: 35		Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 13		Abstained:0
Senator L.J. Farnham		Connétable of St. Brelade		
Senator I.J. Gorst		Connétable of St. Ouen		
Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean		Connétable of Grouville		
Senator M.R. Le Hegarat		Deputy M. Tadier		
Senator T.J.A. Binet		Deputy L.M.C. Doublet		
Senator H.M. Miles		Deputy C.S. Alves		
Senator M.E. Millar		Deputy T.A. Coles		
Senator Sir M.J. Boleat		Deputy C.D. Curtis		
Senator S. M. Kersten		Deputy L.V. Feltham		
Connétable of St. Mary		Deputy H.L. Jeune		
Connétable of St. Martin		Deputy B.B.de S.V.M. Porée		
Connétable of St. Peter		Deputy K.M. Wilson		
Connétable of St. Helier		Deputy L.D. Carpenter		
Connétable of St. John				
Connétable of St. Clement				
Connétable of Trinity				
Connétable of St. Saviour				
Connétable of St. Lawrence				
Deputy C.F. Labey				
Deputy F. G. Voisin				
Deputy M.B. Andrews				
Deputy R.E. Binet				
Deputy A.F. Curtis				
Deputy M.R. Ferey				

Deputy J. Renouf				
Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson				
Deputy B. Ward				
Deputy S.J. Gleave				
Deputy C.D. Leck				
Deputy V. Li				
Deputy A. Maltman				
Deputy R.J. Parker				
Deputy G.A. Raimondo				
Deputy C.J. Rebindaine				
Deputy P.J. Romeril				

The Bailiff:

Accordingly, I can announce that Deputy Voisin has been selected for appointment as the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development. **[Approbation]**

2. The Minister for Treasury and Resources

The Bailiff:

I now move on to selection of the Minister for Treasury and Resources. Senator Farnham, may we have your nomination?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I am pleased to nominate Senator Alan Maclean for the role of Minister for Treasury and Resources.

The Bailiff:

Is the nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations? Accordingly, I invite Senator Maclean to speak for up to 10 minutes, after which there will be a period of questions for up to 20 minutes. Senator.

2.1 Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

I begin by thanking the Chief Minister for the confidence he has shown in nominating me for this important office. I would also like to take this opportunity to commend Senator Millar for the commitment and professionalism she has brought to the role over the last 2 years. For my part, it is a privilege to be considered once again for the office of Minister for Treasury and Resources. Having previously served in this role, I understand both the responsibility it carries and the importance of the decisions it requires. Treasury is the custodian of Jersey's public finances but its role is much more than balancing books. Every financial decision affects Islanders' lives, families facing cost of living, young people building their futures, businesses creating jobs and older Islanders relying on high-quality public services. I will work with the Chief Minister and Ministerial colleagues to keep Jersey financially strong while helping build a more competitive economy, a more affordable Island and a Government that delivers better value for Islanders. My ambition is not simply to maintain Jersey's financial strength, it is to help restore Jersey's position as one of the best governed, most competitive and most successful small jurisdictions in the world.

[10:45]

That will only be possible with collaboration with Ministers and indeed across this Assembly. Success will not be measured simply by healthier public finances but by whether Jersey is more affordable, more competitive and creating greater opportunity by the end of this political term. Strong public finances are not a destination, they are the foundation that allows Jersey to prosper. We begin from a position of strength. Jersey retains an AA- credit rating and a strong balance sheet but we must not be complacent. Government expenditure has grown faster than government income. We have moved from balanced budgets to operating deficits. Borrowing and debt have increased and debt servicing costs are projected to reach around £48 million a year by 2028. Budget 2026 continues the recent trend of rising day-to-day spending. That is not a sustainable long-term position to have. Indeed, the Fiscal Policy Panel has consistently urged us to restore financial discipline, rebuild our reserves and avoid adding new spending commitments unless corresponding savings are identified elsewhere. We must heed that advice, not because restraint is an objective in itself, but because Governments that live within their means have greater freedom to invest in what matters most. Rebuilding our reserves must be a priority. Treasury should not simply be the department that says no. It should be a trusted partner involved early in policy development so financial realities help shape long-term strategy. Where additional investment is required, departments should demonstrate the outcomes they expect to achieve, measure performance and, where appropriate, benchmark results against comparable jurisdictions. Every additional pound should improve outcomes, not simply increase expenditure. Ultimately, every pound entrusted to Government belongs to the people of Jersey. They are entitled to expect value for money. Helping Islanders with affordability must remain one of our highest priorities. Treasury cannot solve every aspect of cost-of-living pressures but, by supporting economic growth, reducing unnecessary costs imposed by Government, encouraging competition and ensuring better value from public spending, it can make a real difference. Economic growth must sit at the heart of Government. Without growth there will be fewer opportunities for young people, less private investment, and increasing pressure on our public finances. Growth is not the responsibility of just one Minister, it should be a shared priority across the whole of the Council of Ministers. Our financial services industry remains the backbone of Jersey's economy and will continue to deserve our full support. The *Time to Win* report provides a practical roadmap for strengthening Jersey's competitiveness. Its principles should be applied to other sectors. Treasury will work with Ministerial colleagues and Revenue Jersey to accelerate those recommendations within our responsibilities, improving services to business, modernising tax administration and ensuring Jersey remains internationally competitive. Islanders will judge us not by the number of reports we publish but by what we deliver. My immediate priorities are to progress the plans for Budget 2027 and begin work on a new 3-year financial framework for 2028-2030. That will be informed by the Fiscal Policy Panel's July report and by a determination to restore sustainable public finances. I will also continue to work to simplify procurement, making it easier for local businesses to compete for Government contracts while continuing to secure value for money for taxpayers. Money spent with local businesses supports local jobs, skills and economic activity. I also want to strengthen Jersey's shareholder role so our States-owned entities remain commercially successful while supporting the Island's strategic objectives. When I became Minister for Treasury and Resources in 2014, Jersey faced a projected structural deficit of £145 million. Working together across Government, we introduced the Medium-Term Financial Plan, restored discipline to public spending and returned the public finances to surplus by 2018, while continuing to invest in front line services and capital projects. Since 2018, the public sector workforce has grown by around 43 per cent compared with around 22 per cent in the private sector. It now represents almost 14 per cent of Jersey's workforce. We need an effective public sector but we also need a strong private sector because it creates the jobs, investment and tax revenues that fund our public services. The public sector is now beginning to crowd out the private sector; the balance must be restored. I commend the Chief Minister for the progress already made in reducing vacant posts and limiting expenditure on external consultants. Those are positive first steps but more needs to be done. The experience I gained from when I was last in this role reinforced 2 lessons. First, Governments achieve more when

Ministers work together around shared objectives. Second, strong public finances and economic growth are not competing objectives, they depend upon each other. Strong finances create confidence, confidence encourages investment, investment drives growth. Economic growth provides the revenues that fund the excellent public services that Islanders rightly expect. I remain optimistic about Jersey's future. We have exceptional public servants, a resilient business community, a world-class finance industry, talented young people and strong institutions. Our challenge is not whether Jersey can succeed, it is whether we have the discipline, ambition and determination to make the decisions that will secure that success. I will work collaboratively across Government, I will support the Chief Minister and Ministers, I will put economic growth at the heart of Government, I will insist on sound public finances, I will expect accountability for public spending and I will work every day to leave Jersey financially stronger, economically more competitive and a more affordable place to live, work and do business than it is today. That is the responsibility that I seek. It is the commitment I make to this Assembly and, above all, to the Islanders we are all privileged to serve. Thank you. **[Approbation]**

The Bailiff:

We now move to a period of questions and the first question is from Deputy Andrews.

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

Can the candidate confirm whether he agrees with me that the States grant should be reintroduced in full by the 2028 Budget?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

Could the Deputy just clarify the date that he gave? Restored in full by ...

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

The 2028 Budget.

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

I think that, as I understand it, is going to be stretching it. If that were to be achieved, it would require other responses elsewhere to compensate. At the moment, Treasury is working on the basis of restoring it by 2030. It is something I strongly believe needs to be restored, without question; it is just the question of the affordability element. I think what I would say to the Deputy is I will take away the points he has made. I am also of the mind to see if we can accelerate but if we are going to do so, we are going to have to make some changes elsewhere to compensate, as I have mentioned.

2.1.2 Deputy M.B. Andrews:

In the recent Government Budget, between £42 million to £45 million of investment income on the reserve is going to be supplementing the Social Security Fund. I want to know whether the candidate agrees with me that we can procure extensive efficiency savings in the current account to ensure that we can reinstate the States grant in full by at least 2029, in that case.

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

I am wondering how long would the Deputy ... I can continue negotiating. We have gone from 2028 to 2029, if we carry on a little longer I might get him to 2030. **[Laughter]** We are in agreement in principle. I am very keen that this grant is reinstated; it should be. In fact, I would not have been keen, if I had been in this Assembly previously, to have agreed to it in the first place. I do have to say that I need to look at the whole picture before committing any further. There are, as the Deputy would be well aware, significant calls on public finances from departments. In fact, I am sure the Deputy has listened to many Members who have been pitching as Ministers, and who have now been awarded that high office, and have all talked about the pressures in their own departments requiring more expenditure. I am looking around the room at one or 2 of them. There are competing pressures

for funding, but I will do my very best and I will certainly come back to the Deputy with the best deal that we can offer.

2.1.3 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South:

I would like to raise a point that was already made by Deputy Voisin about alcohol duty. As I understand it, while we have an alcohol drinking problem in Jersey, we do have one of the biggest issues, I understand it, but it has fuelled this further. It is leading to more people drinking behind closed doors and not monitoring what they are drinking. It is also fuelling the rise of a very unhealthy drinking habit of “pres” where the young drink before they go out because they cannot afford to buy. It is leading, as I understand it from the police, to increased rates of domestic violence behind closed doors. It is also very badly damaging our hospitality industry with many businesses in my district, St. Helier, suffering, with people simply not being able to afford to go there. As this is harming our economy and also causing us costs elsewhere, is this something that the Senator would address?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

The Deputy makes some good points. I have heard the term “pre-loading” before with young people and others indeed finding it more cost-effective to do so. The damage to the night-time economy and more generally is clear. There is always competitive tension, if I can put it that way, from my previous time in Government, not just from a Treasury perspective. Because it is not really specifically - and you might find this slightly strange - a case of Treasury looking to raise more revenue from this particular route, there is very heavy lobbying from the Health Department on the argument of public health and that has been going on for many years. I can see Senator Binet looking slightly bemused. It pre-dated him because I pre-dated him in this Assembly. I will be very happy to look at the matter; it is an important point. There are multiple reasons why we should consider getting the balance right. I agree with what the Deputy said, that the balance is perhaps not right at the moment, so this is open for further discussion.

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

How does the Senator plan to address child poverty in Jersey?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

Well I think that a multi-agency response would be required. Indeed, those agencies that are responsible and focused on that important issue need to have proper funding. I have not looked in detail at that at this particular point, but I think it is important that there is a co-ordinated approach to dealing with it. It is not always just about funding and money though, I have to say, it is about getting the right response and a co-ordinated response. My answer to the Deputy is that I think the multi-agency approach would be the way to go. I would be interested to know what funding pressures there are and we could see what we can do about it within the constraints that I have already alluded to earlier.

2.1.5 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

The candidate mentioned economic growth. The Minister for Treasury and Resources is in a unique position, were Jersey to experience improved economic growth, to ensure that that is distributed equitably among our society. How does the Senator plan to do that?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

I plan to do that in a collaborative way with colleagues on the Council of Ministers. We will look where the pressures are and we will make sure that we distribute funds accordingly to the areas of greatest pressure. I am sure the area that the Deputy is concerned about and referring to is an area of pressure. We need to make sure we get that balance right.

2.1.6 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South:

The candidate will know that one of the roles of Treasury is to recover debts owed to the Treasury. One of the main debts that is still outstanding is I.T.I.S. (Income Tax Instalment System) and social security contributions taken from employees' wages. What is the candidate for Minister going to do to recover these debts?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

Yes, the department is very conscious about these debts, as I am sure the Deputy is aware. Indeed, these principally arose over the COVID period and at that particular point. They may well have increased since then, but they started in the COVID period, and there was an approach to have a light touch in terms of recovery. As far as Treasury is concerned, they are now moving to recover debts that are in arrears and will continue to move to get that money recovered as quickly as possible.

[11:00]

2.1.7 Deputy T.A. Coles:

Has the candidate considered whether or not to impose contract restrictions on any debtors who also service government contracts to ensure that no further contracts are issued to anybody from Government or A.L.O.s if they owe they Treasury money?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

If that is a suggestion from the Deputy, I think it is an excellent suggestion that needs consideration. There will possibly be legal connotations to such matters but, subject to getting appropriate advice, that should be part of the consideration that I would certainly think about. It is the legal implications that will be the biggest barrier to such a suggestion though, I suspect.

2.1.8 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:

The candidate outlined the significant financial challenges the Government will have to overcome. It is widely recognised that digital transformation is one of the few options to reduce long-term costs while improving services. What are his plans for funding digital investment while in department and does he believe Government needs a clear direction on digital change and improvement to fulfil the ambitions he outlined?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

With the last question first, yes. The funding is important to get that right. In fact, it is an interesting point because in terms of rightsizing the organisation, if I could put it that way, the need for and the benefits from digitalisation are fairly clear. I would call it an invest-to-save programme perhaps, something that we have done previously when I was in this role in 2014. We put a programme in place which included just that and it was able to move funds from other departments that were overspending, or not as efficient as they should have been, into the pressure areas such as education at the time and health. Funnily enough, the same pressures still seem to exist. It is an important area and I think we can do a lot to be more efficient within Government if we utilised technology in the appropriate way. Departments need to be making sure that they focus on that.

2.1.9 Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I am glad the candidate used the phrase "invest to save"; I left it out in case it was too contentious. It is a positive direction. The candidate may be aware that one challenge that has held back more widespread digital innovation is that typically departments seek funding for their individual projects with only limited funding on core capability. Will he be looking at how digital is funded and in particular whether more digital investment should be centralised to ensure the right capabilities are delivered across Government at the right time?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

I am not always a fan of centralisation. We see it with large organisations in the private sector, as much as anything else, who centralise and decentralise and go through continuous cycles. The movement is also quite costly, so one has to be careful about that. I think what we have got to focus on is outcomes, so we have got to see what is the best possible way to structure and make sure that various departments are operating in a way that is going to be the most cost-effective and, most importantly, most effective in delivering better quality, lower-cost services.

2.1.10 Deputy C.D. Leck of St. Saviour:

COVID taught many in the financial services industry that home working was possible. Home now for many working in this industry is Mauritius, Philippines, Singapore. The same firms are now increasingly foreign-owned by private equity firms. How does the Senator propose to tackle the constant loss of income to the Treasury from these firms?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

One of the areas that is absolutely key and has been mentioned several times in this Assembly this week, and indeed extensively over the election process, was the *Time to Win* report which has been produced at some considerable cost. What it seeks to do is to make our financial services industry more competitive here in Jersey because I am afraid we have slipped behind. We need to recall that back in the 1970s there were, I recall, about 70 international finance centres. The current total is running into several hundred. The competition is stiff, other places are performing much better than us, they are much quicker, the costs are lower, more cost-competitive. Therefore, we need to make sure that we raise our game, reduce the barriers and sustain our finance industry which is crucial to the economy. It is the biggest contributor, as the Deputy will be well aware. There is more we need to do to focus on what is happening with private equity, which he mentioned. There have been a number of businesses sold within Jersey to private equity. What tends to happen then of course is, not only the revenues go offshore, ultimately they get sold in a 3 to 7-year period, and perhaps we lose all of that tax revenue as such. We need to look much more closely on the relationship with private equity and the acquisition of businesses in Jersey. The key is underpinning our existing financial services sector and making sure we deliver fast on the *Time to Win* report.

2.1.11 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central:

The Senator has mentioned the financial pressures on Ministers and departments. I want to speak specifically about the pressures on Health. Does the Senator accept that Health spending pressures cannot be solved by Treasury discipline alone and that an unrealistically tight Health budget simply moves the cost elsewhere into waiting lists, staff burnout, delayed care, family pressure and ultimately poorer outcomes?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

Well we do not want any of those, do we, so we need to make certain that we address the issue? Health has been spending. My colleague, Senator Binet here, has been doing a sterling job in difficult circumstances that he alluded to in his speech yesterday. I am pleased to say that the team in Health is now stabilising the financial situation. There is currently not a forecast overspend in 2026, as far as I am aware; I hope that position has not changed. **[Laughter]** It just goes to prove that a briefing from only a few days ago can be already out of date. We have to work closely with Health to make sure that key front-line services are delivered. The Deputy was concerned I think essentially about the cutting back of front-line services. That is not on the agenda. Indeed, back in 2014 and beyond when we had to save £145 million, front line services were invested in, they were not cut, so we need to find a way to make sure that that is maintained. That does not mean efficiencies cannot be driven in Health. I will be talking to Senator Binet about opportunities for ensuring that duplication and

bureaucracy and middle roles that perhaps are more of an administrative nature can be managed in a way that is more cost-effective.

2.1.12 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

If the Minister for Health and Social Services did say to the Senator that Health could not safely deliver within its current funding limits, would the Senator's first instinct be to provide additional funding, increase charges, reduce services, use reserves, borrow or raise additional revenue?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

Well, the Deputy has just listed my entire thought process. I would think of all of it and consider what was the best and most appropriate in the circumstances. I keep talking about 2014 because it was quite an interesting time when at that point, we had a structural deficit to deal with. Back in those days we had to work out how we were going to fund the pressures in Health, which were much the same, without causing any particular difficulties. We managed to do that quite effectively. Indeed, at that time, and the Deputy might be aware, there was talk about a health charge being introduced. What we focused on doing as well in parallel with making sure departments were more efficient and made savings and such like, we put a big focus on driving economic growth, and it was successful. We never needed to go, at that point, into the areas of possible charges for health because we grew the economy and the revenue came in and that is exactly what we have to do again. That was why I was so delighted to hear Deputy Voisin, our Minister for Sustainable Economic Development, talking so passionately about what he is planning to do. It will take teamwork. We need to grow the economy, bring in the revenues, and that will help to offset. That was one of the points I do not think the Deputy mentioned, but it is nevertheless really important.

2.1.13 Connétable A. Howell of Trinity:

The Senator mentioned that he will look at government procurement and that he wishes to encourage local suppliers. This is an area that has been of great concern to me, and I just wondered if the Senator could please elaborate what he intends to do to improve our procurement processes.

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

Yes, what I have done straight away, before I have even taken up the post - so that was a little bit ahead of the game and I hope Members do not think a little presumptuous - but I have gone and appointed Deputy Parker as an Assistant Minister with a specific focus on procurement. He is an expert in that area, or he is very shortly going to become an expert in that area. [Laughter] It is something that we feel strongly about. There has been some work, to be fair to my predecessor, Senator Millar. I know some work has been done with regard to procurement to improve the situation, to try to simplify the processes which are unbelievably laborious and have been 70-page documents. It definitely disadvantages small and medium-sized businesses in Jersey, which is not an acceptable position, particularly with the pressures that we are feeling at the moment. This is why we want to really get tucked into procurement and make sure that it works. It ties in with the earlier discussions about economic growth. We need to support our local businesses in Jersey. It is absolutely crucial for tax revenues and jobs and general prosperity.

2.1.14 Connétable R.D. Johnson of St. Mary:

In his address, the candidate referred to the shareholder role of the Minister for Treasury and Resources. Obviously, the various A.L.O.s were set up to enable a certain amount of commercial freedom within them, but does he consider that either within the M.O.U.s (Memorandum of Understandings) or other documents he is in a position to exert sufficient financial leverage on such matters as recruitment and loans?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

The Constable referred to A.L.O.s. I think it is States-owned entities, in fact, he was probably referring to? Yes, so States-owned entities. There are M.O.U.s with those various organisations and that is a mechanism which gets reviewed every 3 years. I need to double-check, I think the next review is due in about 18 months' time, but I will refer to the department to just double-check on that. Regardless, we do need to have conversations to make sure that they are acting in our best interests and taking the strategic objectives of the Island into consideration because that is a key factor, as far as I am concerned, and I think probably at the heart of what the Constable was talking about.

2.1.15 The Connétable of St. Mary:

I thank the candidate for his reply, and I did indeed mean States-owned entities. Three of those States-owned entities own property. In addition, the States, through Jersey Property Holdings, has other assets. Does he consider he has a specific role in ensuring that there is some form of joined-up thinking and oversight over those companies or those entities in administering the States portfolio of properties?

The Bailiff:

You have got 2 seconds, Senator.

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

Yes, is the answer to the question, I absolutely do. I will take it outside of the Assembly with the Constable because I have got more to say on the subject.

The Bailiff:

I can announce that Senator Maclean has been appointed as the Minister for Treasury and Resources. **[Approbation]** In accordance with Article 19(7) of the States of Jersey Law, all Ministers have now been appointed and, therefore, Senator Farnham is formally appointed as Chief Minister. Congratulations, Chief Minister. **[Approbation]**

Senator L.J. Farnham:

May I be permitted to say a very few words?

The Bailiff:

Yes, a very few words. **[Laughter]**

Senator L.J. Farnham:

May I just thank Members for the confidence they have shown today in allowing the new Government to be formed and for the constructive spirit in which the process has been conducted. In making the nominations for Ministers, which has not been easy given the strength of this new Assembly, I have sought to form a Government that reflects its breadth, skills, views and experience. While I would like to congratulate my fellow Ministerial colleagues, I would remind Members this is a moment of responsibility, not of a celebration. The electorate have placed their trust in this Assembly to deliver and they will judge us, not by our words today, but by the difference we make to their lives over the next 4 years. Families are facing cost-of-living pressures, the young people hoping for an affordable home, the patients waiting for care, the businesses looking for confidence and the communities are depending on strong public services. Islanders expect delivery now, not distraction. They expect us to work together where we can, to disagree respectfully where it is necessary, but always to put Jersey first. In closing, may I thank Members for placing their trust in me once again. It is a great honour to serve this Island as Chief Minister, and I will do all I can to lead a Government that is stable, effective and focused on getting the job done. Thank you, all, very much. **[Approbation]**

[11:15]

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Chief Minister. Now, slightly curiously, under Standing Order 117A, after selection of Ministers, I must invite Members to decide whether or not you wish to adjourn immediately and continue later today or tomorrow morning. I presume Members wish to continue but I must invite Members to ...

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I intend, after further consultation with now-elected Ministers, to discuss the Assistant Ministerial position which, once that is published, might be helpful to some Members in deciding what other posts they may ...

The Bailiff:

Well, if you want to make a proposition that the Assembly adjourns now and continues at a later time today, then you must make that proposition so Members can consider it.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

No, I will allow the process to continue and speak to Members and communicate with Members over the next 30 minutes and confirm the Assistant Ministers as soon as possible.

The Bailiff:

Yes, all right. If no one makes the proposition that the Assembly adjourns.

3. Appointment of the Chair of the Privileges and Procedures Committee

The Bailiff:

We now move on to consider the chair of the Privileges and Procedures Committee. Are Members content to proceed? In that case that is what we shall do. In accordance with Standing Order 118, the Assembly is due to appoint a new chair of the Privileges and Procedures Committee. I invite Members to make nominations for chair of that committee. Are there any nominations?

Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin:

Yes, I would like to nominate Deputy Carina Alves for chair. Am I allowed to say a few words for the nomination?

The Bailiff:

No, I do not think so, no.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

OK, right.

The Bailiff:

I should have stopped the practice that crept in early on today, but I thought it would be unkind in the circumstances but I do not think it is really permitted. Thank you very much. Is the nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations? Accordingly, Deputy Alves, I invite you to speak for up to 10 minutes, after which there will be a period of questions for up to 20 minutes. Deputy Alves.

3.1 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central:

I would like to thank the Constable of St. Martin for proposing me, as she was previous chair. Since being elected in 2018 I have had the pleasure of serving on the Privileges and Procedures Committee in a number of roles, as an ordinary member, as vice-chair and as chair in 2021 before the 2022

election. During that time I have worked on a wide range of projects, from electoral reform to improving Member support, governance and procedures. One of my proudest achievements is establishing and securing the Political Awareness and Education Sub-Committee. P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) plays a unique and essential role in this Assembly. It is not about policy or political positions, it is about how we function as a legislature, our procedures, our standards, our conduct and the support we provide to Members. It is the backbone of how we operate as a democratic institution and underpins everything that we do. Because of that it requires a chair who is collaborative, fair and able to work across all parts of the Assembly. Political awareness and education remain an area I am deeply passionate about. I was born and raised here in Jersey and, like many Islanders, I learned very little about our political system growing up. Politics simply was not a part of everyday conversation. However, I was fortunate to have a mother who has an interest in politics, a Portuguese woman who came to the Island in the late 1970s, who had lived through an authoritarian rule in Portugal until the Carnation Revolution in 1974. From her I learned from a young age the importance of democracy, participation, making sure that people's voices are heard and of never taking our freedoms for granted. Later, when I became a teacher, I realised how little had changed and that is what drove me to establish the Political Awareness and Education Sub-Committee. For me this was not just about short-term engagement, it was about creating lasting change, and that is why ensuring that this work was embedded structurally and continues beyond any one individual or political term has been so important. In the last election I was encouraged to see an increase in voter turnout numbers and the continued development of initiatives from vote.je and the Digital and Public Engagement Team in the Greffe but there is still more to do. As chair, I will continue to prioritise engagement throughout the entire term, not just elections, ensuring that all Islanders understand how our system works and feel confident taking part in it. A large piece of work last term was the overhaul of the Code of Conduct for Elected Members, which was updated following a comprehensive review by the committee. The now rules-based system is much more accessible and allows both the public and Members a clearer understanding of the basic expectations required of us and the sort of behaviours we should be demonstrating. I would like to thank Members for their engagement with this review last term, and I remain committed to ensuring this updated framework is fit for purpose going forward and continues to focus on modernising behavioural rules and restoring public trust. Another significant piece of work which I completed behind the scenes over the last 2 terms was the implementation of the automatic voter registration system. This has been a long and complex project requiring co-ordination across Government, the Parishes, the Judicial Greffe and the States Greffe. Like any project of this scale there were challenges along the way, and it took longer than initially anticipated. But its successful implementation is a major step forward in modernising our electoral system, improving accessibility and reducing barriers to participation. I would like to particularly acknowledge and thank the Comité for their support in this. It has been invaluable and I hope to be able to continue working constructively with them. Our elections are a significant logistical undertaking, and this was a collective effort. It shows what can be achieved when we work collaboratively and effectively together across the public sector. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the election, particularly Parish staff and volunteers, as well as colleagues across the Judicial Greffe, States Greffe and Government, for the work undertaken both in the lead up to the election and on polling day itself. The legacy report from the outgoing committee highlights the breadth of work undertaken over the past 4 years and sets out important areas for continued focus. This includes reviewing the composition of procedures of the Assembly, our election legislation and bringing forward a full root and branch review of Standing Orders. It also highlights quieter but equally important work, such as refining the process for personal statements and reviewing systems like the e-petitions following public feedback. These may not always attract attention, but they are fundamental to how we operate. They are fundamental to how we conduct a debate, how we hold each other to account and how accessible and transparent we are as an Assembly. As chair, I will ensure that this work continues, taking a balanced approach between reform and stability, always with the aim of improving how we function as a Parliament and

clarity in our rules and procedures. Alongside procedural work I am a strong advocate for improving the support available to States Members. Members of this Assembly work incredibly hard, often dealing with complex constituency issues, alongside their responsibilities here in the States. Over recent years we have seen many improvements in the resources available through the States Greffe and I would like to place on record my thanks to their continued support. But there is always more that can be done. If elected, I have 2 main points I would like to focus on in this area; the first, professional development opportunities. This is something I remain committed to personally and institutionally. Through my experience, including the C.P.A. (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association) election observer programme and the Professional Development Certificate in Parliamentary Governance from the McGill University, I have developed a good understanding of international best practice and the importance of benchmarking ourselves internationally. This is not just about comparison for its own sake. It is about ensuring that our processes, our elections and our procedures maintain the highest standards and continue to earn public trust. The second is placing greater focus on Member wellbeing and peer support. This includes more structured regular training throughout the term, not just at the beginning, and opportunities for team building across the Assembly. We do not always agree politically and nor should we, but we must be able to work together effectively and respectfully. Another area I believe requires continued focus is Member conduct and their understanding and application of our Standing Orders. P.P.C. has a responsibility not only to develop the rules but to ensure they are understood, respected and upheld. This includes upholding the Nolan Principles of public life; selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership, which must underpin everything we do, ensuring that we meet all the standards expected by us and by the public. Clarity in our rules supports better debate, better decision-making and, ultimately, better outcomes for the public. Throughout my time in this Assembly, I have demonstrated my ability to work across different roles with a wide range of Members and on complex and at times contentious issues. Whether it has been electoral reform, voter registration or procedural change, I have always sought to listen carefully, work collaboratively and find practical solutions that command broad support. Importantly, I have shown I can work constructively on issues where I may not personally agree with every detail, focusing instead on delivering what the Assembly has asked for in a fair and balanced way. P.P.C. must continue to be a committee that reflects the Assembly and brings people together. It must support Members, uphold standards, improve governance and ensure that legislature continues to evolve in a way that serves the public. As chair, I would ensure that inclusive representation across the committee is maintained, open and constructive working relationships and a clear focus on outcomes that benefit the Assembly and the Island as a whole. Ultimately, the work of P.P.C. is not just about internal processes, it is about ensuring that we can do our jobs effectively on behalf of the public that we serve. In closing, serving on P.P.C. has been one of the most rewarding parts of my time in this Assembly. It sits at the heart of our democratic system, shaping how we operate, how we represent and how we are held to account. I believe I have shown that I am approachable, adaptable and determined and that I can work with colleagues across this Assembly, regardless of political differences. I will continue to prioritise political awareness, Member support, strong governance and continuous improvement in our procedures. Above all, I will work to bring this Assembly together, to ensure that regardless of our politics, we function effectively as a Parliament and serve the people of Jersey to the very best of our ability. It will be a privilege to serve as chair of P.P.C. **[Approbation]**

The Bailiff:

We will now move to a period of questions and the first question is from Deputy Morel.

3.1.1 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

It is my understanding that the Scrutiny chairs and the panels do not hold their own budgets. While that would be a question ordinarily for Scrutiny, I think it is for P.P.C. as well because P.P.C. creates

that liaison with the States Greffe. Would the candidate, for want of a better word, please explain her views on how budgets for Scrutiny Panels should be administered?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

I think over the years we have seen quite a significant growth in the budgets to ensure that States Members are able to do their job properly and that Scrutiny is able to, where needed, employ the expertise to be able to do in-depth reviews. I think as long as there is a sound business case and that we can justify and explain exactly where funds need to go and what we need in order to make sure Scrutiny and P.P.C. and the States Greffe in general are well budgeted, I am supportive of ensuring that the financial resources are there available.

3.1.2 Deputy K.F. Morel:

Does the candidate not think that it would be wiser that each Scrutiny chair should have an allocated amount and it is their choice, putting the politicians in charge of their budgets, rather than the administrators?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

I think the Deputy raises a good point, and I think that is probably something that is worth exploring. Personally, I remember when we did not have constituency support, for example, and having visited some other jurisdictions where in constituencies the representatives had given their own budget and their own pot of money to do as they pleased to support that constituency. I found that quite unusual and a little bit shocked that we did not have that same kind of set up. I think that is the kind of thing that the Deputy is suggesting should probably happen with Scrutiny Panels, when there is a bit more freedom with what the chair and the panel can do with their budget. I am not opposed to that at all. I would like to probably have a look at how it is done in other jurisdictions, so that if we do do that there are the right safeguards in place to make sure that it is not abused. Because in some other jurisdictions where I have seen these constituency budget pots, I have sometimes maybe been shocked by some of the practices that they have applied.

3.1.3 Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour:

Can I congratulate the candidate for her nomination? She was a great vice-chair on P.P.C. and we worked together as A.C.M.s (Assistant Chief Ministers) and I always found her to be very fair and thorough in all her dealings. She mentioned in her speech a review of Standing Orders and went into a little bit of detail. I wonder if she could just flesh out what are the main issues that she would like to see resolved or changed on Standing Orders?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

The C.P.A. have published their preliminary statement and there was a suggestion that they would be looking at Standing Orders. I am not an expert in that area but I do know that, from conversations with the election observers, there was a comment that there have been numerous amendments and often that made it quite difficult to understand Standing Orders and where the different amendments fitted in.

[11:30]

In the last term as A.C.M., I put forward legislation to regulations to simplify the language in our legislation. I think that is probably the way we should be going. We should be trying to modernise our language as much as possible and just making it as easy to understand as an accessible, not just for us but also for the public. Because the Standing Orders is a public document as well.

3.1.4 Deputy M.R. Ferey:

In the last Assembly we had a course on negotiating for better results in politics. Would the candidate like to see a similar course in the next Assembly?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Yes, is the short answer. I was really privileged to be able to undertake that qualification with McGill University on Parliamentary Governance. Unfortunately, C.P.A. have now pulled that qualification, so it is no longer available. I know there were a number of other Members here ... I think the Constable of St. Helier also was on that course with me. I think anything that enables us as Members to have something that we can present as continued professional development, when and if we leave the Assembly, is vital.

3.1.5 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

One of the thorny issues that P.P.C. tried to deal with in this last term - but perhaps we did not quite get there - was remote participation. What are the Deputy's views on that? Would she intend to bring a proposition back to the Assembly to try to get a settled permanent solution for that?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Yes, we are in a bit of a difficult position at the moment where some things were changed and other things were not. It is part of the legacy report to revisit that element of our Standing Orders on remote participation. I can give you my personal view, obviously this may not be reflective of the committee as I do not have a committee at the moment. I would like to see something that would enable people, for example, to remote-participate in circumstances that where they may be off-Island but it is for valid reasons. I think I have given the example of where my grandmother was dying of mouth cancer and I was having to come back and forth in between the sittings. My family are not local. My immediate family live here but my wider family do not. That was a very difficult time for me and financially that was quite difficult as well because I was having to come back and forth in between sittings and the flights to Madeira are not cheap. I think once the committee is constituted, obviously I need to hear from everybody's views and build a consensus going forward but my personal view is that.

3.1.6 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Does the Deputy agree with me that it is important that we do have a very clear and settled position on that going forward, so that all Members and the public as well know where we all stand? She has made a commitment to take it to the committee; will it be one of the first priorities for the committee?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

It is part of the legacy report. I do not want to commit to making everything a priority because otherwise nothing gets done. But I do think it was something that we did come back and forth on. I think, as we evolve and obviously we need to take into account people's disabilities and people's family set ups, it is really important that we, as an Assembly, are as inclusive as possible and we make it possible for people to do their jobs as easily as they can and without any ambiguity I think as well. Because, like the Deputy said, the public need to be clear on what our rules are, as well as we do.

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

Would the candidate/chair be willing to continue to support the Diversity Forum's work and, in particular, the work that that body is doing around accessibility for Members but also for the public?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Yes, absolutely. In my first term the Deputy was the chair of the Diversity Forum and I know that she spearheaded it. I am really pleased that it is now in Standing Orders as well, so it is a standing committee. Short answer is, yes, absolutely. I have over the years seen what Assemblies look like in other jurisdictions, and I am often blown away by how accessible and how educational they are as

well. I think obviously being in this building presents its challenges, not just for us as Members but also for the public. Yes, absolutely, I am completely behind the Diversity Forum.

3.1.8 Senator I.J. Gorst:

This is the time of the Parliament term when Members generally feel frustrated with the Troy Rule; 49 Members have been elected to serve the Island. We also have a petition about the review of Government and yet it is the very time when everybody just wants to get on with the work. I wonder if the Chair could articulate what her views are about reform of Government, maybe looking at the Isle of Man system because otherwise it just becomes a perennial issue of frustration.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

We do have the Machinery of Government Sub-Committee whose remit is to look into more detail around that. Personally, my own personal view, I was not here for the committee system so I do not know the pros and cons to both, I do think the Troy Rule is quite important because I think in a set up where we do not have party politics, I think it is important to be able to convince those that are not in Government that what Government are doing are the right things. I would not want to see the Troy Rule disappear personally. If Members are not in agreement with that, then, as I said in my speech, I am but the chair and the vehicle to presenting ideas and I do not always present things that I am supportive of. But that is my position on the Troy Rule.

3.1.9 Senator I.J. Gorst:

I am grateful for the chair's explanation. Of course it is often presented as a choice between the current Ministerial system or the previous committee system, but I think there are systems, particularly if we look at the Isle of Man, that almost act as a hybrid. I wonder if she would put that to the sub-committee for consideration.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

At this stage I am happy to consider anything, and I think this probably would be best placed with the Machinery of Government to do a piece of work on, to look at other jurisdictions and see if there is something that maybe we could adapt that could work here.

3.1.10 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I think it follows on from the spirit of Senator Gorst's question. Does the prospective chair believe that there is sufficient understanding, both in the Assembly and in the wider public, about the separation of powers between Government and this Assembly? I can give one example that perhaps does not help with clarity for Members, is that we all have gov.je emails but we are not all Members of Government. We also all have access to vast public databases of who the public officers are and civil servants are, which is probably a breach of data protection, which I have also raised with the Greffe staff, is that something which needs to be regularised in the view of the candidate?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

I think this probably comes under a wider piece of work about raising political awareness in education. Because I understand the Deputy's frustrations and the lack of understanding that there is often between what is Assembly business, what is Government business and how they interact? With regards to the emails, I have not really considered that or thought about that specifically. I think it is important that we have a standardised email address so that it is easy enough for people to know where we can be contacted. Whether that should be that we should all have @statesassembly instead of @gov.je I do not know. I do see positives in having access to the Government contacts list. I know on many occasions I may have been given a name by a Minister, or I do not know their surname or I am not sure what they do within its department. Having access to that is useful to us as Members and, ultimately, I think the public expect that as well. Many times that I deal with constituents who are quite shocked and surprised that I do not have access to systems that they assume that I do, like

the Social Security system; for example, even as a Government Minister or an Assistant Minister I have to get an authority to disclose for my constituents, to ensure that I can access any information. I think there is a balance to be struck. But I think the wider issue for me is doing that education with the public, so that they realise that we are Members of Parliament before we are Members of Government and that that is the priority and that we are still even going through a process of electing our Government. Because that is something even post-election people have been asking me to do this or to do that or to find this information. I have had to say to them: “Hold on a minute, we still do not have our Ministers in place.”

3.1.11 Deputy M. Tadier:

I can definitely see it is a positive to have access. I just question whether it is ethically correct. Will the chair give an assurance that she will not accept answers that involve inertia or this is the way we have always done things when it comes to changing some of our internal processes, which simply do not stack up to scrutiny when it comes to the arguments for doing things more in line with the principles she describes in her learning from McGill or in the Nolan Principles?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

I think I have a track record of pushing for positive, practical solutions that are not always traditional. However, like I have said to you before, I am simply the chair and if there is not the appetite or if Members choose to ignore what is often evidence-based better approaches to doing things, then I have to go with the will of the Assembly.

3.1.12 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:

Looking at where things move forward, will the chair of P.P.C. be looking into the dress code that is involved, especially looking at how it is reflected as gender-specific dress is currently the scheme? In speaking to other Members previously, we currently have no issues with perhaps the dress code and how it is interpreted but perhaps it is one proactively to be looked at. I would rather ask it here than take more Assembly time later.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Yes, absolutely. I have often considered coming in a shirt and tie myself to be sympathetic to my male counterparts. Yes, again, that is within Standing Orders. When we do a full review of it, I think that will probably be an area that we will be looking at to tweak and modernise hopefully.

3.1.13 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:

We will shortly, I think, be receiving reports on the election from the C.P.A. observers and, I imagine, the Jersey Election Authority. Can the prospective chair give an assurance that she will take very seriously the recommendations that might arise out of those, in particular, whether there are gaps in our electoral law that might have been exposed during this election and what she will do to make good on recommendations and to bring those forward?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Yes, I mentioned in my opening speech that I have often had to deal with contentious issues. In fact in my first term in 2018, following the election observers report then, I joined a sub-committee, probably a bit naively, on electoral reform. Because I saw it as a mathematical problem that needed solving, being a mathematician, and went in with my spreadsheets and got what I thought was the perfect mathematical balance. Obviously when that was communicated to the public it was very different because people have got very different views on our composition, and obviously tradition plays a part in it as well. I think I have always tried my hardest to implement recommendations, ensure that they are taken seriously. But, again, as I keep coming back to, I am at the will of the Assembly. But I will always push through anything that I see is best practice and best for the public of Jersey.

3.1.14 Deputy J. Renouf:

Just one point, my recollection is that the C.P.A. observer mission to this recent election was only decided at the very last minute by the Assembly. Does the candidate nominee think that it would be a good idea to maintain the practice of C.P.A. missions for future elections?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Yes, absolutely. However, there is obviously a budget that needs to come with that because it does cost us. Initially we had decided not to have the C.P.A. election observers this time because we thought there was going to be no change or very little change or just the automatic voter registration. But obviously with the last-minute introduction of the Senators this changed the view of the committee and so we decided to bring back the C.P.A. observers.

[11:45]

But I, personally, am very supportive of having them at every single election. But there is obviously a cost that goes with that and we need to agree that as a committee and as an Assembly.

3.1.15 Deputy M. Tadier:

It has not been mentioned yet in this section, but when the debates were happening previously the term “gerrymandering” was used quite a lot. Is it the chair’s view that now we have a gerrymander system we simply have to get used to it or can the voters in the urban areas and the residents in the urban areas of Jersey expect some element of fairness in future electoral systems?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

This is obviously an area that is very close to my heart. Like I mentioned in 2018, I did obviously look at what I thought was a perfect mathematical system, not necessarily the perfect system for the people of Jersey or how they felt about it. I think, ultimately, this Assembly made a commitment - not in the last term, I think it was the previous term - that any reforms would be based on equity and fairness. I stand by those things. I also stand by international best practices. However, it is not something I will be necessarily pushing for. I think we need to wait to hear from the C.P.A. observers’ report and see what their recommendations are and also the J.E.A. (Jersey Electoral Authority). But, ultimately, I support equality in everything that we do and fairness.

The Bailiff:

Supplementary?

Deputy M. Tadier:

No, Sir, I think we are out of time anyway.

The Bailiff:

We are. Thank you, Deputy. Accordingly, I can confirm that Deputy Alves has been appointed as chair of the Privileges and Procedures Committee. **[Approbation]**

4. Appointment of the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee

The Bailiff:

We now move on to chair of the Public Accounts Committee, I invite nominations for that role.

Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier:

I would like to nominate Deputy Karen Wilson.

The Bailiff:

Is that nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations? I invite Deputy Wilson to speak for up to 10 minutes, which will be followed by up to 20 minutes of questions. Deputy Wilson, do you want to put your microphone on, please?

4.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement:

I thought my voice was loud enough. I would like to thank the Connétable of St. Helier for nominating me to serve as chair of the Public Accounts Committee. Her track record as P.A.C. (Public Accounts Committee) chair in the last term is both impressive and widely respected across this Assembly. Having worked closely alongside her as assistant vice-chair, I do not underestimate the responsibility of building on that legacy, nor that of other respected scrutineers who have shaped this committee. During that time I saw first-hand what rigorous, constructive scrutiny under effective leadership can achieve. I have also learned a lot from the amount of Scrutiny work I did in other areas of policy, gaining a deeper understanding of the public system we are all part of. I believe this experience, along with a track record in governance, risk management and investigation responsibilities in my professional life, has equipped me with the skills needed to chair the panel, and I am ready to do so now. If elected, I will build on that strong foundation and lead a P.A.C. that is disciplined, evidence-driven and focused on results, one that delivers better Government by pursuing a clearer objective, which is to ensure public money is used economically, efficiently and effectively with stronger accountability for outcomes. We are operating in a period of increasing demand on public services and finite public resources. In the midst of a cost-of-living crisis the need for sharp, focused scrutiny of public spending has never been greater. Even where finances are sound and processes compliant, that is not enough. Every pound, whether invested in major capital programmes, such as healthcare facilities, school modernisation and critical infrastructure or directed towards cost-of-living support, must deliver measurable outcomes and real visible value for Islanders. Members will be familiar with the work of the Comptroller and Auditor General with whom P.A.C. has a close working relationship. Year after year the C. and A.G. (Comptroller and Auditor General) highlights recurring issues: weaknesses in programme delivery, a lack of clear performance measures, inconsistent follow through on recommendations and too often insufficient demonstration of value for money. The role of P.A.C. is not simply to note these findings but to drive accountability from them. That means ensuring recommendations are implemented, not just accepted and parked, requiring accounting officers to explain not only how money was spent but what was achieved and tracking performance across departments where failures are systemic, not isolated. The C. and A.G. has repeatedly stated very clearly: "Jersey does not have a financial reporting problem, it has a delivery problem." Too often the link between spending and outcomes is weak, delayed or simply not demonstrated. We are good at accepting recommendations but less good at implementing them. Some remain open years after being made, others are marked complete without fully addressing the underlying risk. This is not a criticism of intent, it is a challenge as to whether Government has embedded the discipline, ownership and follow through required to deliver change. What will I bring to the role as chair of P.A.C.? My approach is simple, practical and focused on outcomes. First, with regard to delivery and productivity, P.A.C. must move beyond reviewing reports and become relentless in following up what happens next. Where recommendations are accepted, the evidence provided must demonstrate meaningful change within clear and measurable timeframes. I will introduce and propose a system of public tracking for C. and A.G. recommendations, with named accountable officers, clear deadlines and regular recall hearings. Where issues remain unresolved after 2 or 3 years, we will ask why and we will keep asking until progress is demonstrated. This means ensuring that recommendations are fully implemented and evidenced, reporting is clear, consistent and meaningful, governance and assurance frameworks are applied consistently across departments. Second, I want to strengthen accountability. Government has acknowledged through the Fiscal Policy Panel the need to restore fiscal balance and improve value for money. P.A.C. must ensure that these commitments are delivered in practice. Many of the challenges identified by the C.

and A.G. cut across departments; siloed working, undermining efficiency weakens value for money and increases pressure on public finances. Under my leadership we will test cross-Government coherence, scrutinise shared outcomes and hold clear lines of accountability for delivery. We will examine areas such as departmental strategic reviews where progress has been limited and treat them as missed opportunities for identifying efficiencies. We will track performance across service lines, test collaboration in practice and expose where fragmentation is undermining outcomes. Thirdly, on value for money, compliance alone does not deliver value. The central question must always be: what did Islanders get for the money spent? Under my leadership P.A.C. will consistently test whether programmes are achieving their intended outcomes, whether they represent value for money and whether there is credible evidence to support those claims. We will scrutinise prioritisation, long-term planning and alignment between resources and objectives. The real risk identified by the C. and A.G. is not that we do not know what needs fixing but that we do not fix it quickly enough. Closing that gap is essential to maintaining public confidence, and P.A.C. is the Assembly's principal mechanism for holding the Executive to account for delivery. People expect public money to be spent lawfully, wisely and effectively and to deliver the outcomes it was intended to achieve. When it does not they expect the Assembly to act, and P.A.C. is central to that trust. If I am elected today, I will chair a committee that is evidence-led, grounded in audit and data, persistent in returning to issues until improvement is demonstrated, focused, prioritising areas of greatest financial and public impact and independent, meaning clear distance from the Executive and, above all, one that operates in the service of the public. In terms of priorities, the committee's work will address the recommendations from the legacy report and focus where the financial and public impact is greatest; emergency preparedness and critical infrastructure resilience, cost-of-living pressures and the effectiveness of support, health spending, including the new healthcare facilities programme and sustainable funding, technology and digital investment, high cost, high risk, an area that requires strong governance and capital expenditure, including scrutiny of the proposed Jersey Capital Investment Fund and its interaction with existing financial controls. Across all of these I will ensure a clear focus on programme management, procurement, financial discipline and productivity is maintained and this is conducted in the spirit of openness and transparency and with respect. There have been different approaches to P.A.C. leadership over time, some more collaborative, others more focused on performance and delivery. The most effective committees, however, have been clear in purpose, confident in their authority and unafraid to challenge where public money is not delivering results. At a time when every pound matters, that is the approach this Assembly needs. If elected I will bring Members together into a capable and committed committee, united by a common purpose, which is to ensure better outcomes and better value for Islanders. That is the approach I offer, grounded in integrity, objectivity and a clear focus on delivery. I ask Members for their support.

[Approbation]

The Bailiff:

We now move to a period of questions. Are there any questions for Deputy Wilson?

4.1.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central:

The Public Accounts Committee looks at slightly different things to Scrutiny Panels in that it looks at how things have been implemented. How would the Deputy look to work with Scrutiny chairs to ensure that Scrutiny and P.A.C. works effectively together?

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

One of the common areas of work will be around the Common Strategic Policy and to look at how and in what ways each of the various Scrutiny Panels will be delivering on their own objectives and their own priorities. I think the test for P.A.C.'s contribution in that is to test whether or not the outcomes are being delivered and to make sure that there is a cross-governmental approach to accounting for that delivery.

4.1.2 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I was pleased to hear the Deputy reference the tracking of recommendations and actions on that. Would she be open to working within S.L.C. (Scrutiny Liaison Committee) with the chairs of other Scrutiny Panels to combine perhaps that tracker so that Scrutiny Panels could look when they are scrutinising how things are planned to be done, whether that matches up with recommendations that have been made by the P.A.C.?

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I think that is going to be essential because in terms of delivering successful outcomes, we know that each of the Scrutiny Panels will be connecting with other Scrutiny Panels, and clearly Ministers will be connecting with other Ministers around delivery. I think the notion of having a tracker that is transparent and that people can see the progress that is being made will help both Ministers, as well as Scrutiny Panels.

4.1.3 Deputy R.J. Parker of St. Saviour:

I would like to ask the Deputy how she feels that the P.A.C. has any teeth to enforce accountability. From my experience, having worked on P.A.C. many years ago, we seem to make the same mistakes and not learn from them time and time again. I think a lot of it is we seem to recommend various ways in which things could be improved. But there seems to be a complete lack of real teeth and bringing about consequences for action not being taken and what do you feel about that?

The Bailiff:

Through the Chair next time, Deputy Parker.

Deputy R.J. Parker:

Sorry.

The Bailiff:

Just to face me and “Deputy Wilson”, not “you”.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I welcome Deputy Parker’s view on that and indeed have experienced some of that myself, in terms of the various committees that I have sat on. You heard in my speech that I mentioned the notion of respect for the work of P.A.C. and for the work of Scrutiny.

[12:00]

I do think we have got some way to go in helping Ministerial teams and officers through the work that we do. The way to do that is by bringing the evidence and the transparency in a non-confrontational way but acting as a critical friend to be able to show and demonstrate where improvement can be made. I think one of the things that you will have heard me say there is that strengthening the accountability in my view is when we are constantly on it and the process of recall. I have not seen the process of recall particularly used, in my experience, over the last 4 years. But I think on behalf of the public we should not just rely on a Scrutiny meeting that happens every quarter or every 6 months, I think we need to step up or approach to improving accountability through that particular mechanism.

4.1.4 Deputy R.J. Parker:

Yes, it brings to mind patient records, which was an area I looked at when I was on Public Accounts. It appears when we ended up putting in another system, we ended up exactly with the same problems. We did not learn from our experience of the previous time. I ask the candidate again really, does she feel that the actual Public Accounts Committee should have more teeth than just recommending change?

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I think this is a really interesting area to explore because in principle I agree, yes, I do not believe that the mechanisms that are within the current arrangements for P.A.C. are strong enough. I do not think that we have the strongest accountability framework that we should have. But I do not think that that is entirely in the remit of just the Public Accounts Committee. I think there are also Ministerial responsibilities, how they work with their civil servants and they articulate their requirements and that civil servants in turn can present back to the Ministers what is possible and what is deliverable. I think all of that debate and that discussion about outcomes and about the accountability that goes with delivering outcomes is how and in what way we can explore and we can test that at P.A.C. We do need to find ways of strengthening that.

The Bailiff:

Any more questions for Deputy Wilson? If there are no further questions, then I can confirm that Deputy Wilson has been appointed as Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. **[Approbation]**

5. Appointment of the Chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

The Bailiff:

We now move on to the 5 elections for chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panels. I remind Members in relation to these 5 appointments, Ministers and Assistant Ministers are not eligible for appointments to these positions of chair. For each panel the relevant Minister only, not the Assistant Minister, is prevented from either nominating a candidate or taking part in the vote, if there is a vote. The corresponding Members for each panel are set out in the Consolidated Order Paper for today, for example, in relation to Corporate Services, neither the Chief Minister nor the Minister for Treasury and Resources can nominate or vote and so on, as set out. All Ministers are, nevertheless, able to take part in the questioning of each candidate. The first panel is the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

I would like to just put it on record that at the moment we still do not know who the Assistant Ministers are. For this bit of section though I do not know if there will be any means to be able to vote but I just wanted to put it on record that we still do not know the list. Therefore, it would only be the Ministers that would ...

The Bailiff:

Yes, it is only the Ministers who are prevented from voting. But Ministers and Assistant Ministers are not eligible for appointment to these positions of chair. We move on to the chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel and I invite Members to make nominations for the chair of this panel.

Deputy L.F.K. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

As vice-chair of the outgoing panel, I am very pleased to propose Deputy Lindsay Feltham.

The Bailiff:

Is that nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations for chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel? No. In that case, I invite Deputy Feltham to speak for up to 10 minutes, after which you will face up to 20 minutes of questions.

5.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central:

I would like to thank Deputy Stephenson for proposing me, and I also acknowledge the work of the outgoing panel and the legacy report it has left for this Assembly. I want to set out why I am standing for this position, why this remit matters to me and how I would approach the role. The panel scrutinises matters arising from the work of the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and

Resources; that gives it 2 broad areas of responsibility. The first is Treasury, the Budget, taxation, public spending, long-term financial planning, reserves, capital projects and the way public money is raised and used. The second is the corporate centre of Government; the machinery of government to procurement, digital systems, people and employment matters and the systems that sit behind delivery across departments. It also means scrutinising legislation within that remit and helping to give the Assembly assurance that the detail has been properly tested before decisions are made. That remit matters to me because I have seen it from different sides of this Assembly, how decisions made at the centre of Government affect whether policy can be delivered. A budget line, a savings target, a staffing decision, an I.T. system, a procurement process or a piece of legislation can determine whether an Islander receives the service or support that this Assembly intended. For me Corporate Services is not just about figures on a spreadsheet, it is about whether Government is being honest about the choices it is making, whether public money is being used well, whether policies are deliverable and whether the impact on Islanders is clear. I bring relevant experience to this role. I have chaired the Public Accounts Committee, and that has given me a strong grounding in looking at how decisions are implemented in practice. P.A.C. work often means looking back at what the Government said it would do, how it was delivered, whether risks were properly understood, whether money was used well and whether the outcomes matched the original intention. That is very valuable work but is often retrospective. Corporate Services gives me the opportunity to apply that same discipline earlier in the process, before decisions are made and before implementation begins. It can ask whether the assumptions are sound, whether the funding is realistic, whether the risks have been identified, whether the delivery plan is credible and whether Ministers have been clear with this Assembly and with Islanders about the choices being made. P.A.C. taught me to look at what happened after decisions were made. Corporate Services gives me the opportunity to apply that discipline before decisions are made. That same approach is important when scrutinising legislation. Legislation can have the right intention but still fail if the detail is not right. The Assembly is often asked to make decisions on complex legislation in limited time. A good Scrutiny review can get into the definitions, commencement dates, financial consequences and practical effect, so that this Assembly can have greater confidence that what is being asked to approve will work. Scrutiny can identify where amendments may be needed, test whether the policy intention is matched by the legal drafting and look at whether the people affected have properly been heard. I have also worked as a Minister. I have been on the receiving end of Scrutiny and I value proper scrutiny when it is constructive and evidence-led and fair. As a Minister, I have had to bring forward proposals, make funding bids, work within financial constraints and explain the practical impact of decisions. I know that the budget affects whether services can be delivered and whether Government can follow through on the commitments it makes. The outgoing panel's legacy report shows the breadths of work undertaken over the last term, including Government Plans and Budgets, public hearings with the Chief Minister and the Minister for Treasury and Resources, taxation, long-term financial planning, public sector spending and issues across the corporate centre of Government. I would want to build on that work. The next panel will need to maintain a clear focus on 4 areas within its remit. First, the budget, public spending and long-term financial planning. The panel will need to look at revenue and expenditure, reserves and funds, capital spending and the assumptions behind the numbers. Scrutiny should not assume that one political answer is right before the evidence has been tested. Colleagues will come to questions of spending, savings and reform from different political perspectives, and that is entirely right and legitimate. The role of the panel should be to test whether proposals are clear, evidenced and deliverable. Where Government proposes savings or reform, it should ask, what problem is being solved, what evidence supports the approach, whether the impact has been understood and how the Assembly will know whether the change has worked. Second, taxation and financial policy; tax proposals need to be scrutinised, not only by asking how much revenue they raise but by looking at who is affected, how the change will be administered and whether the legislation properly reflects the policy intention. Third, the corporate centre of Government; that means procurement, digital, people and employment matters, public sector reform, performance

reporting and the machinery of government itself. Good policy can fail if the systems behind it do not work. Poor procurement wastes money, poor digital delivery makes services harder to access, poor workplace culture means staff leave, services suffer and problems are hidden, rather than resolved. Weak performance information means Ministers and the Assembly cannot properly judge whether policy is working. Fourth, legislation within the panel's remit; that may include taxation legislation, public finance legislation, employment or people-related matters, digital or data issues and legislation affecting the machinery of government. The Assembly should be able to rely on Scrutiny, who have looked carefully at whether the policy is clear, whether the drafting works, whether the implications are understood and whether those affected have had proper opportunity to be heard. I want to be clear about the style of scrutiny I would seek to lead. I do not see the role of a Scrutiny chair as simply opposing Government. Scrutiny should be prepared to challenge Ministers but it should also be prepared to listen, follow the evidence and make recommendations that can be realistically improved decision-making. I would want the panel to work constructively with Ministers, officers, stakeholders and other colleagues. But constructive does not mean passive; it means being clear, prepared and persistent. It means asking questions that need to be asked, following up when answers are not sufficient and making sure recommendations do not disappear into a report and then quietly get forgotten. I would also want the panel to be accessible across the Assembly. If colleagues have concerns about spending, delivery, procurement, staffing, digital systems, legislation, taxation or transparency, I would want them to feel able to raise those concerns with the panel. I am standing for this role because the issues within this panel's remit matter to me. They matter because this Assembly has a responsibility to look beyond slogans and test the detail. If elected, I would want the panel to be known for doing the detailed work within its remit; testing budgets, scrutinising taxation and financial proposals, questioning delivery plans, examining the machinery of government, scrutinising legislation and giving the Assembly the assurance it needs before major decisions are made. I would work with panel colleagues to set a focused work programme, build on the outgoing panel's legacy report and ensure that Corporate Services plays its full part in holding Government to account over the next term. I hope I can count on the Assembly's support. **[Approbation]**

The Bailiff:

Are there any questions for the Deputy?

[12:15]

5.1.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

Thinking off my feet, I think one really important role that I saw of the Corporate Services was the role of co-ordinating scrutiny around the Budget and I think there are some lessons learnt about that. I think we have heard in the elections - I heard definitely from constituents - that scrutinising very big budget levels means that it is really hard to understand the detail and understand what the direction of travel will be for the Government, and sometimes movements between budget lines is hard to see with that. I was wondering, from your work in Scrutiny before and then as a Minister, there are any things to see changes in how we would be scrutinising the Budget going forward.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I thank the Deputy for her question because it gives me the opportunity to say that I know that for a Scrutiny chair of Corporate Services and other Scrutiny members, when we go into summer recess this certainly is not a summer off because you go very quickly into the role of scrutinising things like the Common Strategic Policy and the Budget. I agree with the Deputy, sometimes it is very difficult to get into the detail. I am reminded right now of my former colleague, Deputy Rob Ward's proposition that he brought to the States around financial reporting meeting, I think, C.O.F.O.G. (Classification of the Functions of Government) standards, so that they could be benchmarked against international best practice and placed within certain areas. I think things like that help. I think, again,

and I will allude to the question I asked the chair of the P.A.C., I think Scrutiny working together with the P.A.C. to look at where things have not worked in the past, and spot possible issues before they arise through Scrutiny work, is really important, and I would look forward to working with the chair of P.A.C. and other Scrutiny chairs really closely in that respect.

5.1.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Deputy for her answer. I was wondering if she felt that there was a need, for example, for additional resources to be able to bring in for Scrutiny as a whole with Corporate Services being overall co-ordinators around the Budget, to bring in external expertise to really do that number crunching and understand what is behind that number. I have felt sometimes that we were pushed back a little bit to have that external expertise, and I was wondering what her opinion is on that.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I think external expertise is very often important to Scrutiny Panels. It is important to get objective, impartial advice. I remember now the question, I think, from Deputy Tadier to the chair of the P.P.C., I think it is an important thing that the Scrutiny Liaison Committee look at the budgets available to it and make representations to P.P.C. and the Government, as appropriate.

The Bailiff:

Are there any other questions for Deputy Feltham? If there are no further questions, then I confirm that Deputy Feltham has been appointed as chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

6. Appointment of the Chair of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

The Bailiff:

We now move on to the appointment of a new chair of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel. I invite Members to make nominations for the chair of that panel.

Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier:

I would like to nominate Deputy Samantha Gleave, please.

The Bailiff:

Sorry, I missed the name.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Deputy Gleave.

The Bailiff:

Deputy Gleave. Is the nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations? There are no other nominations. I invite Deputy Gleave to speak for up to 10 minutes, after which you will face up to 20 minutes of questions.

6.1 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South:

Members, I am standing for the chair of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel because I believe this is one of the most important Scrutiny roles in the Assembly at this moment. Jersey's economy is not an abstract subject. It is the foundation beneath almost everything else we want to do. It funds public services, it supports jobs, it shapes the cost of living, it affects whether young people can see a future here, and it determines whether future Assemblies have real choices or only difficult trade-offs. If the economy is strong, Jersey has options. If it weakens, those options narrow very quickly, and that is why this panel matters. I also want to acknowledge the work and importance of the outgoing panel. Its legacy report shows the scale of this role and the substantial volume of work across a very wide brief. There is important work there for the next panel to consider, particularly around connectivity, the cost of living, barriers to business, the visitor economy, cyber

resilience, international development and, of course, delivery of Time to Win, but I would approach that legacy with focus. The next panel cannot do everything at once. It will need to prioritise where Scrutiny can add the most value, where there is the greatest economic risk, and where Ministers most need constructive challenge and support. The Jersey Financial Services Commission remains the engine of Jersey's prosperity. It supports high value employment, fund a significant part of public services, strengthen our international standing, and give Jersey a role in the world far beyond our size. We should be proud of that, but the *Time to Win* report is clear: Jersey's financial and related professional services sector remains strong, but the competitive environment has changed. Other jurisdictions have not just caught up, they have overtaken us on speed, certainty, digitalisation and customer experience. The report does not call for lower standards or de-regulation. It calls for sharper execution, clearer accountability, reduced friction and a renewed appetite for growth. I strongly support that direction. I also want to be clear, Scrutiny should not slow down what has already been identified as urgent. The role of this panel should not be to put Time to Win through yet another layer of delay, it should be to help ensure it is delivered. That means asking questions where the actions are clear, timetables are realistic, responsibilities are understood, progress is measured and Government, the regulator and industry remain aligned behind delivery. A report, however good, does not strengthen the economy on its own; delivery does. The lesson from Time to Win should not stop with finance. Jersey has decided the Jersey Financial Services Commission needs renewed focus. We have identified the barriers and are taking action. That same seriousness now needs to be applied to the wider economy. That does not mean pretending every sector is the same as finance. They are not, but the principle is transferable. Jersey cannot afford to take businesses for granted. The days when it was simply a privilege to do business here are over. If we want businesses to come here, stay here, invest here and grow here, Jersey has to work harder. We need to create an environment where entrepreneurs feel nurtured, and that means the one-person business taking a step into the unknown, the small firm trying to grow, and the successful entrepreneur who has already proved themselves and is deciding where to invest next. Those people have choices, and at the moment too often Jersey is turning opportunities away. That should concern us. We need to be braver. Jersey used to be nimble. We used to understand that one of the advantages of being small was the ability to move quickly, make decisions and create solutions that larger jurisdictions could not. We need to recover that confidence. That starts by being honest about red tape. On the doorstep, people asked me what I meant by "unnecessary red tape". One example I often gave was the requirement for a sole trade business licence. It is not required in the same way in Guernsey, the Isle of Man or the U.K., yet Jersey still requires most businesses to obtain one before they can trade. On its own, removing that one requirement would not transform the economy, but it is symbolic of a wider problem. Too often we start from control rather than support. To be clear, I am not talking about removing the protections we need for workers or Islanders. Good regulation matters, standards matter, reputation matters, but there is a difference between protecting people and making it unnecessarily difficult for someone to start, invest, employ or grow. Much of the heart of Jersey's economy lies in St. Helier South. The offices, shops, hotels, restaurants, professional firms, Waterfront businesses are in the district I represent. If St. Helier works, Jersey works. If town is vibrant, commercially active, attractive and connected, the whole Island benefits. If businesses in town are struggling with cost, complexity, recruitment or uncertainty, that is not only a local issue, it is an economic issue for Jersey. We also need to be honest about how growth is achieved. We cannot spend our way out of every problem, we cannot tax our way to prosperity, and we cannot regulate our way into growth. The sustainable answer is to grow the economy, improve productivity, reduce unnecessary friction, support investment and create the conditions in which businesses can innovate, employ, take risks and create value. That is where constructive scrutiny can add real value. I do not see Scrutiny as opposition; I see it as one of the ways this Assembly helps Government make better decisions. Good scrutiny should not seek to trip Ministers up and it should not become a brake on delivery. Nor should it be passive. Its job is to test the evidence, test the assumptions, identify risks early and ask whether a policy will work in the real world. With Time to Win, that means supporting

pace while checking delivery. With wider economic development, it means asking whether Ministers are removing barriers to growth and listening to business. With external relations, it means asking whether Jersey's international reputation and market access are being actively strengthened. With international development, it means ensuring Jersey's work overseas is effective, well-governed and reflects well on the Island. Across all of this, it means keeping a clear focus on outcomes. Artificial intelligence adds urgency to this debate. It should not dominate every economic discussion, but it should sharpen our thinking. Jersey's tax base is heavily supported by high-value finance and professional roles, and those are among the types of work most exposed to A.I. (artificial intelligence) driven change. We need to prepare. A.I. can help Jersey become more productive. It can help businesses become more efficient. It can help Government reduce duplication and improve services, but it also means that we cannot afford economic drift. We need growth, productivity, skills and resilience before future pressures become a crisis. So, why me? For those of you who do not know me, I am Jersey born, I went to J.C.G. (Jersey College for Girls), and I was lucky enough to study at Oxford. While the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* rightly calls me a former advertising professional, I was only in that for 5 years. I left that industry in 1995, because I realised there was no point in marketing something that was broken and not fit for purpose. So, for the last 30 years, I have been a management consultant, a business strategist. I fix products that are broken, I fix services that are broken, and I help businesses turn around. My professional background is in strategy, analysis and delivery. I have spent much of my career helping organisations understand complex problems, gather evidence, listen to different perspectives, test assumptions, and turn that work into practical recommendations. I have a great relationship with my clients, but they have not paid me to agree with them and to always hear what they want to hear. They pay me to test assumptions, to look at evidence and to sometimes tell them hard truths when they need to hear it. That is what support looks like and that is literally what I do for a living. Good scrutiny is not about having the loudest opinion in the room, it is about asking the right questions, building the evidence, identifying delivery risks and helping the Assembly understand where the policy will work in practice. This is the approach I would bring as chair: constructive but not passive, fair to Ministers but rigorous on delivery, open to business, workers, consumers and expert advice and evidence, focused on outcomes, not just process. For me, the economic challenge of this term is clear: Jersey must protect and strengthen financial services. We must deliver Time to Win, we must apply a growth mindset to the wider economy, we must nurture entrepreneurs, we must become braver and more nimble, we must reduce unnecessary red tape, we must back businesses that create jobs and opportunity. This is why this role matters and this is why I would be honoured to chair the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

[Approbation]

The Bailiff:

Are there any questions for Deputy Gleave? If there are no questions, then I can announce that Deputy Gleave has been appointed as chair of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

[Approbation]

7. Appointment of the Chair of the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

The Bailiff:

We will move on to a new chair of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. I invite Members to make nominations for the chair of that panel.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

I would like to propose Deputy Victoria Li for the position.

The Bailiff:

Is that nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations for Chair of that panel? If there are no other nominations, then I invite Deputy Li to address the Assembly for up to 10 minutes, after which there will be up to 20 minutes of questions.

[12:30]

7.1 Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North:

I would like to start with a line from Confucius: “The wise are not confused, the benevolent are not anxious, the brave are not afraid.” I once read that as a description of leadership. I have come to read it as the description of Scrutiny. Not confused, seeing the system as it really is. Understand the challenge in depth so we can tear real progress from the appearance of it. Not anxious because Scrutiny’s purpose is to serve a child, a family, an Islander who will never see the hearing. At the end of the day, what matters is that we did our most careful work for this Island. Not afraid to put the hard questions to a powerful department, and to ask it again when the first recommendation was not taken up. That is the chair I am asking you to let me be. Over the last 4 years, this panel met more than 260 times. It produced 5 substantial reports, hundreds of findings and recommendations. It held 60 public hearings and lodged 8 amendments to this Assembly. That work was done by a panel of States Members who listened. May I congratulate Deputy Catherine Curtis and Senator Helen Miles on their new roles. That continuity is the point. The outgoing panel called itself a constructive and critical friend to the Government. I agree with that - harder on the evidence, fair to the Ministers - and I am asking to keep that relationship going and to pick up the work that it could not finish. Let me tell you what I will be watching for through one single lens. Last year, close to 700 babies were born in Jersey, the fewest on record. Every one of them begins a journey this Government has a duty to hold: helping their parents feed them and keep them well; not missing a milestone; finding the nursery place their families fight to afford; the school that is right for them; the S.E.N.D. (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) support that is still too inconsistent; the funding that is still unequal; the language help a multilingual child needs; the pathway that carries them into work until one day they become parents themselves, and that cycle begins again. At every stage, that child needs 3 things from us in this order: to be kept safe, to be cared for, and to be taught. Kept safe, that is Justice and Home Affairs. A home free of violence. An online world that is no longer a danger, and when our safety net fails a child, a system that redirects them rather than discards them. Cared for, Children and Families. Taught, Education. Three Ministers, one journey, and we already know where it leaks because this panel’s own work has shown us. On education, this panel reviewed secondary education funding, it reviewed lifelong learning, and on that review a number of its recommendations were rejected. So, the panel wrote to the Minister in April this year asking them to re-think again, concerned that its recommendation has been misunderstood and that stakeholders’ own evidence has not been fully reflected. I will be that Member who sees it answered. I will watch the childcare promise. Real money has been committed to nursery places for 2 and 3 year-olds, but it runs on a model where parents pay up front and reclaim later. The panel’s own conclusion was that it remains unclear whether access has widened. Funding commitment is not the same as a child in a place. That gap will always be a Scrutiny question. I will watch the new full partnership leadership model now on a 2-year trial, one of the very demographic decline those birth figures described, and ask the question that matters: is this really a change for children and young people, or is this a reorganisation of the top? On Children and Families, the funding going into the Children’s Services Improvement Plan and the home asset is large, but the question is never the figure, it is whether the service reaches the child it was voted for, and whether safeguarding is strong enough to let our most vulnerable children not just survive but thrive. I will ask that question every quarter. This panel’s landmark review asked what protects Jersey’s children from online harm and it made 63 findings. I will hold the Government to account. I will press for foster care recruitment to be restored to where our children need it to be. On Justice and Home Affairs, in March, this Assembly passed 5 laws to better protect women and girls from stalking, domestic abuse, sexual offences, public order and strangulation. This panel supported every one, but the funding to make those laws real

across the justice system was not yet resolved. This panel also secured funding through its own amendment for community police officers and digital forensics. I will hold the new Youth Justice Roadmap to its word, because the child who did not get enough attention and support from our safety net too often arrives there. Prevention rather than intervention. I intend to be watching that whole journey. How I would chair? Evidence first; hearings that bring into the room the people with real lived experience, and those who helped this community thrive: education psychologists, foster carers, S.E.N.D. parents, young people, the campaigners this panel has always listened to. A panel viewed across this Assembly with open and timely access to information and the judgment formed over years of deciding whether effort changes a child's life. To choose which questions this panel asks first: practical, with discipline and depth; not confused, not anxious, not afraid. For every child on that long journey, and for every Islander who trusted us to watch the money and the promises, both. Lastly, I want to thank the people of St. Helier North who placed their trust in me. They sent me to do the work and to hold this Government to account on the things that shape their daily lives, their children's schoolings, their safety and their families. Chairing this panel is how I intend to honour that trust. My fellow Members, if that is the work that you came here to do, please join me on this panel.

The Bailiff:

Are there any questions for Deputy Li?

7.1.1 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

I congratulate the candidate on her successful candidacy. I wanted to ask, yesterday I asked the prospective Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning about special educational needs and reports that I had received about the vindictive attitude potentially in the Education Department towards people who complain about the level of special educational needs. Would the chair, or soon-to-be chair, please explain the approach that Scrutiny would take to determining whether there is validity to these claims or not?

Deputy V. Li:

Our S.E.N.D. is in crisis and we do not need to repeat that. When we did our review in 2025, we have 2,095 children registered as they meet the record of needs. That is the document that helped the teacher, helped the parents, helped the education psychologist to understand what needs there are for those children. It does not mean that they have the needs, and if we imagine those 2,095 standing in the Royal Square, we are not fighting for a huge number. We are fighting for the rights for that many children. I really want to work with the new appointed Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to really look at that: how we can support every single child and every single family with their needs and start from there and collaborate with Home Affairs as well to understand where we are with those numbers. Only when we understand what exactly the needs and the records of needs, then we can understand how we can support them one by one.

7.1.2 Deputy K.F. Morel:

It was in a hustings during the election, I was being asked about these subjects and it came across to me that perhaps there is a need to look at the culture within the Education Department. I was wondering what would the Scrutiny chair like her panel to do with how they approach the issue of understanding the culture of the Education Department and whether it needs to be changed or improved in some way?

Deputy V. Li:

Critical friends, I think that is the message that I want to pass through. I think Scrutiny attacks will always get ignored and Scrutiny flatters is useless. So, I would think that I would support the good work and challenge the work that has not been delivered. That is the culture that I am going to bring.

The Bailiff:

Are there any more questions for Deputy Li? If there are no further questions, then I can announce that Deputy Li has been appointed as chair of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. **[Approbation]** I note the time.

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT PROPOSED

The Bailiff:

The adjournment is proposed. Are Members content to adjourn now? The Assembly stands adjourned until 2.15 p.m.

[12:42]

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT

[14:16]

8. Appointment of the Chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel

The Bailiff:

The Assembly is now due to appoint a new chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel. I invite Members to make nominations for the chair of this panel.

Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South:

Trying not to dwell too much on what you said before about making too much of a speech beforehand, I believe, as vice chair as this panel in the last term, it is good to have a continuation and stability, so I am delighted to nominate Deputy Hilary Jeune.

The Bailiff:

Is that seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations? In that case, I invite Deputy Jeune to speak for up to 10 minutes, after which she will face up to 20 minutes of questions.

8.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

Thank you to Deputy Coles for nominating me. Here I am again, asking Members to support me as chair for the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel. Two years in this role has shown me both what the panel can achieve and how much is still left to do. My speech today is 2 parts: how I work and where I believe this panel needs to focus in the term ahead. Scrutiny is not opposition. Done well, it is the mechanism by which this Assembly ensures that government policy is evidence-based, properly costed and delivered. I have always understood the chair's role as a critical friend, challenging where challenge is needed, working constructively where that gets better outcomes, and being honest with Ministers and with this Assembly when something is not working. I have learned this panel has an important job to do. When Ministers bring legislation forward, Members want confidence it has been properly tested, that the panel has worked out what needs tweaking, what needs real amendment and what should be rejected outright. We have already done that. On the Residential Tenancy (Jersey) Law, we took evidence from all sides, brought significant amendments and helped deliver a law that the majority of the previous Assembly could support. We also called out where new legislation gave Ministers sweeping powers through Orders, powers that could hit small local businesses hard, without consultation or Assembly oversight. Sometimes, it was smaller in scale but just as important. We listened to a local shepherd about the impact of off-lead dog walking on land where he kept his livestock, and we introduced an amendment to the Dogs (Jersey) Law to make sure dogs are kept on leads in livestock areas. This brief touches every part of Island life, so I want the panel to increase their dialogue with a range of voices: landlords and tenants; environmental groups and developers; utility companies; the third sector; businesses and Parishes.

A panel that only hears from government officers and Ministers will miss what is happening on the ground, and I am committed to working constructively across the Assembly. The E.H.I. (Environment, Housing and Infrastructure) brief now spans 4 Ministerial portfolios with a new Minister for Planning and Regulation. That means regular dialogue across Government built before formal hearings, not just during them. This panel's job is not to embarrass Government; it is to improve policy. Yesterday afternoon, R.106/2026 was presented to the States. It creates a new Minister for Planning and Regulation, transferring planning and regulatory functions from the Infrastructure and Environment Department and consumer protection regulatory functions from the Ministry for Sustainable Economic Development. I understand the rationale, but this is a huge change for the Government and for the Scrutiny Panel, so we must resolve 2 questions immediately. First, how has the department budget been divided, and does the Infrastructure and Environment Department have sufficient resources to deliver its statutory functions around climate, P.F.A.S. (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), marine protection and animal welfare, for example, now that planning and regulation, income and officer capacity has been separated? Second, the new structure creates a risk at the boundary between planning and environmental protection. When the Minister for Planning and Regulation grants a permission that affects protected habitats, water quality or marine environments, who is accountable, given the Minister for the Environment carries the statutory environmental responsibility but had no role in that decision? These questions must be answered before the first significant decision of this term; not after. I would seek briefings from both Ministers within the first month. There is also unfinished business. Planning and the Island Plan: of the 40 Bridging Island Plan proposals, only 8 are completed. For example, what is needed is the long-term population and housing assumptions, the minerals and waste evidence-base, the West of Island Planning Framework. All of these are outstanding and essential before the next Island Plan can begin. The new Minister for Planning and Regulation should set out his timetable for completing this foundational work before the panel. P.F.A.S.: urgent, unresolved and financially enormous. Jersey Water estimates Island-wide treatment at £140 million to £210 million. The Government's own estimate is £20 million. That gap has never been satisfactorily explained. I called in the proposed regulations precisely because we needed answers. Yesterday's Ministerial statement left the level of priority and resources for this work unclear. The panel will press for clarity immediately. The Marine Spatial Plan: 80 of the 91 actions remain outstanding. Jersey has legal obligations under the O.S.P.A.R. (Oslo Paris) Convention and a 30-by-30 biodiversity commitment. I want to see a clear, Ministerial timetable and quarterly reporting to the panel to make sure that this is being completed. On climate, the individual policy areas that affect Island's energy costs, both transport and heating, and the adaptation work that we will need from the effects of climate, like excessive flooding, excessive heat, stronger storms and tide surges, all are important and are workstreams within the Carbon Neutral Roadmap. The Climate Council has made recommendations. The panel will require the Minister to set out which recommendations she is accepting, which she is not and why. Housing: implementation. The last Government introduced significant changes in quick succession. Before asking what comes next, this panel's first job is to understand what is happening with what has already been agreed. Are these changes working as intended? Are there any unintended consequences that need correcting? There are outstanding commitments. Three specific workstreams need active tracking. The Empty Homes Policy, secured through this panel's amendment to the last Budget, needs to move from commitment to action. The homelessness strategy needs implementation monitoring, and the evaluation of the First Step scheme needs to be published and decisions made if the Minister for Housing will request the initiative to be put back on the Budget for 2027. The food regulation which was passed in March 2026 with commencement set for January 2027, but the licensing fee model, which this panel challenged on the grounds it risked harming smaller micro-food businesses, remains unresolved. The previous Minister committed to returning to the Assembly with a fee proposal before commencement. That commitment now falls to the new Minister for Planning and Regulation; the panel will hold him to it. Infrastructure: there is a regulatory backlog. Drug driving regulation was withdrawn following stakeholder concerns. The

panel needs to understand what replaces them and when. The 1956 Road Traffic (Jersey) Law needs modernising; a huge and lengthy task that needs a clear timetable. The Island-wide Active Travel strategy has still not been published, despite its importance to the climate targets. These are not minor loose ends; they are commitments made and not yet delivered. Infrastructure around waste and charging: the liquid waste charging mechanism proposed from 2028 has no clear model, no revenue assumptions and no implementation detail. The draft solid waste strategy needs to be agreed, funded and implemented. These are significant policy decisions with real financial consequences for Islanders, and this panel must scrutinise them before they are presented as done deals. Finally, Fort Regent remains the most significant and complex infrastructure project on the Government's agenda, unresolved on funding, milestones and operational model. The Jersey Capital Investment Fund has just been established, with Fort Regent explicitly flagged as its test case, but the key details, how projects will be prioritised, how competing pressures will be managed, how the fund interacts with the departmental budgets, are all still unresolved. This panel must scrutinise the Jersey Capital Investment Fund's governance from the outset. If Fort Regent is the test case, the decisions made in the first year of this term will set the precedent for every major capital project that follows. Continuity as chair gives this panel the best start on a large inherited workload. Of course, it is still to be seen how Ministers will prioritise and whether they take us in a new direction, but this panel will be ready either way. Finally, I see this panel as belonging to its members, not its chair. My job is to make sure the panel works as an effective team, that every member's contribution is valued and that our reports are read, acted upon and followed up, and would like to invite any Members who would be interested in this panel to come and talk to me afterwards. This is a panel that I have built over the last 2 years. It is a panel that I am asking the Assembly to let me chair again. Thank you.

[Approval]

The Bailiff:

Are there any questions for Deputy Jeune?

8.1.1 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South:

As a member of the panel in the last term, I agree with the candidate's vision of what needs to be done. Of course, in that she mentioned P.F.A.S. I would like to know what her objective is or how she believes that this scrutiny of the P.F.A.S. and the Arcadis report will be carried on over the next 4 years?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I mentioned P.F.A.S. because we have yet to hear from the Minister how she would like to take this forward. Because it was called in, it means that even though the previous Assembly supported the principles we will need to see how; we will maybe have to do that again. I think it is really important that we first see how the Minister wants to set the standards for what the water quality standard would be related to P.F.A.S. That is one set. A second set, of course, we have the petition that is outstanding, that was calling for filters within schools. I think we need to see, again, what the Minister will be doing in that regard, both the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister for the Environment. Finally, in the legacy report of the Scrutiny Liaison Committee, there was a suggestion to make P.F.A.S. a standalone panel. I think that is something that we need to discuss at the Scrutiny Liaison Committee when that convenes to see if that is still needed, depending on how this new Government takes the P.F.A.S. agenda forward. From there, we can decide if we have the right resources within Scrutiny to be able to do the Scrutiny work within this panel or have a standalone one itself.

The Bailiff:

Any further questions for Deputy Jeune? If there are no further questions, I can confirm that Deputy Jeune has been appointed as chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel. **[Approbation]**

9. Appointment of the Chair of the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel

The Bailiff:

We now move on to a new chair for the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel. Are there nominations for the chair of this panel?

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

I would like to nominate Deputy Beatriz Porée, but I see she has just left the room. I am sure she will be back with us shortly.

The Bailiff:

Let us see if she has run away to avoid being nominated. Yes. Any nominations for the chair of the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I would like to nominate Deputy Beatriz Porée.

The Bailiff:

Is that nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations? Deputy Porée, you have up to 10 minutes to speak, after which you face up to 20 minutes of questions.

9.1 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée of St. Helier South:

I rise today to ask Members to support my nomination as the chair for the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel. Over the past 4 years, I have had the privilege of serving and supporting constituents with issues ranging from social security and employment to health, housing and discrimination. Those experiences have reinforced my belief that good policy must always be rooted on the reality faced by Islanders every day. I believe I have relevant skills to lead this panel. I bring competence, experience, and a strong understanding of the Health and Social Security portfolios, which I have gained while previously serving on the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel and while working closely with officers and Ministers on important reviews and policy developments. If elected chair, one of my priorities will be to build upon the legacy work of the previous panel and to ensure that important issues are not lost during this transaction.

[14:30]

I wish for the panel to continue monitoring progress on health funding reform, the pension saver scheme, maternity services, dementia care and the ongoing implementation of assisted dying services. These are significant pieces of work that will have long-term implications for Islanders and deserving of careful scrutiny. I also believe the panel should take a keen interest in the effectiveness and accessibility of mental health services. Recent legislative reforms relating to mental health capacity demonstrated the importance of ensuring that our laws, services and safeguards continue to meet the needs of Islanders, while protecting their rights and their dignity. Another priority will be to maintain the panel focus on our social security policy. At a time when many families continue to face financial pressures, it is essential that we scrutinise how support is delivered and the panel to assess the impact of the policy changes, and to ensure that the most vulnerable members of our community are not left behind. Previous work undertaken by the panel on income support and benefit administration, I liked the importance of this focus. As chair, I would promote a culture of fairness, collaboration and respect. Effective scrutiny relies on building professional relationships while remaining independent and willing to ask difficult questions when necessary. My experience of work

with diverse groups of people, both before entering politics and during my time in the Assembly, has taught me the value of listening, consensus building and constructive challenges. Ultimately, my commitment is to ensure that the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel provides rigorous oversight, protects the interests of Islanders and help improve the quality of public policy and services. Decisions made both within the Health and the Social Security Departments affect every resident from birth through to late life, and they deserve true and thoughtful scrutiny. I would be honoured to have the opportunity to lead this important panel, and I respectfully ask Members for your support. Thank you. **[Approbation]**

The Bailiff:

Are there any questions for Deputy Porée?

9.1.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I congratulate the candidate. My question is about 2 of the reviews that the previous panel completed, one which was on the A.D.H.D. (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) prescription issue, and the other was the Family Friendly legislation. Could the candidate outline how she is going to follow up on both of these, including the Ministerial response for the latter?

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

What I would like to say in terms of the A.D.H.D., after the legislation has been passed, I think the majority of the processes went smoothly. We are now at the situation where an agreement needs to be made between the G.P.s (general practitioners) and the hospital in terms of prescribing medication in a fast and effective way to Islanders. In terms of Family Friendly, I believe that the review was deemed as being very successful and done with extreme relevance. The previous Minister for Social Security is not here right now. She did pass, in principle, quite a lot of reviews. I think now, as the new chair, what I would want to do, I would want to listen from the new Minister to see how the Minister will want to take forward the full implementation.

9.1.2 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Once her panel is convened, would she write to the new Minister for Social Security to prompt the views on those recommendations for the Family Friendly review?

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Yes, my intention is to do so. I do intend to allow the Minister to settle and myself to gather new Members to form the panel, and this will be one of the first questions I would be willing to ask of the new Minister.

9.1.3 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South:

This is not something that I took up with the Minister for Health and Social Services, but it is something maybe, I was wondering whether you ... congratulations on your appointment ...

The Bailiff:

Deputy Porée.

Deputy S.J. Gleave:

... Deputy Porée, sorry. Congratulations. One of the blocks that keeps on coming back is the relationship with G.P.s. It has not just been a block on A.D.H.D. prescription, it has also been a block with the dementia strategy that I have been working on, and I wonder whether that could be a particular focus in terms of looking at what are the barriers there and how we can improve the relationship?

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

After the legislation has been passed and I say that my priorities would be to form the new panel. At this point I would like to invite you to have a conversation with me and tell me a bit more in detail what your concerns are from your parishioners so we can start ...

The Bailiff:

If you address the Chair then you are less likely to fall into this trap.

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Yes, that is my answer, thank you, Sir.

The Bailiff:

Any more questions for Deputy Porée? No, in that case I can confirm that Deputy Porée has been appointed chair of the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel. **[Approbation]**

10. Appointment of the Chair of the Planning Committee

The Bailiff:

That brings us to the chair of the Planning Committee. I invite Members to make nominations for the chair of this committee.

Connétable A. Howell of Trinity:

Please may I propose Deputy Alex Curtis for the chair of the Planning Committee. He has served while I have been on the Planning Committee as our deputy chair and I recommend him highly.

The Bailiff:

Is the nomination seconded? **[Seconded]** Are there any other nominations? Accordingly I invite Deputy Alex Curtis to speak for up to 10 minutes, after which there will be questions for up to 20 minutes.

10.1 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:

I will thank Members in advance for the time as this is the last appointment of the day. I am standing for chair of the Planning Committee because I believe this committee serves an important role in ensuring trust and fairness in the planning system. I also believe it has the opportunity and the role to independently support the Minister for the Environment, potentially now the Minister for Planning and Regulation, and this Assembly in making the planning system, our Island Plan, and policies, the best they can be for Islanders. After all, we are the primary decision maker for most applications that test our policies. We hold significant planning and Island knowledge from this. I have been a member of the committee since I was elected in 2022 and served as vice-chair from 2024. In that time I have chaired many applications and full meetings, and I thank members of the 2022 committee - especially the retiring chair of the committee, Connétable of Trinity, Philip Le Sueur - for their support and their hard work during the last term. During my election I made clear to my parishioners the importance of the Planning Committee and my role on it, and I stated I have worked hard to drive fair and balanced decisions and chair effective meetings. Planning decisions cannot please everyone but I believe that well-reasoned decisions from well-managed meetings can demonstrate the fairness of the process. It is on this mandate that I stand for chair today. For those less familiar with the Planning Committee, what does it do? Well, the committee makes decisions under the Planning and Building Law, typically for larger or more contentious items. The committee represent a democratic mandate for decision-making, and makes around 100 decisions on applications a year. These include reviews of refusals, requested by applicants at no cost. The Planning Committee can also make decisions to issue enforcement, vary conditions, and other matters as within its powers. Importantly, the Planning Committee makes decisions in line with the policies in place at the time. Those are those of the Island Plan and supplementary guidance. It is not for committee members to make

decisions purely on their own feelings. They must weigh the competing tensions in any decision, and provide their decision with specific reasons, quoting the policies at play and providing a commentary as to their choice. Planning decisions are not and never will be purely technical. Policies require the decision-maker to consider a range of tensions, such as the impact that development will have on neighbours or the character of the area, the impact on wildlife and ecology, but also the expectations of development by an applicant, the need to support the economy and provide appropriate housing, but ultimately ensuring the strategic aims of our plans are maintained to sustain consistent and fair decision-making. The committee has more latitude than the department in deviating from the plan, and we work best when we reflect the Island in our decision-making. However, as the saying goes, with great power comes great responsibility. Having a system in which States Members make planning decisions is a deliberate one that has been sustained through decades, and one I believe represents the right model for Jersey. So within that, what is the chair's role? Firstly, chairs meetings, sets the agenda, is a single point of contact for the department, and ultimately leads the committee. However, they have no greater say in voting decisions. Every member contributes an equal vote and tied votes are determined in the negative; that is, to not approve permission or not pursue development. Planning Committee meetings are meetings that are held in public and the chair permits public contributions at their discretion. The format results in a process that requires a chair strong in running meetings and holding order. It is not uncommon for tensions to run high in Planning Committee meetings, either between opposing parties or toward the committee, and I have demonstrated in my chairing that I provide a firm and respectful approach to handling the varied situations that arise, while ensuring fair processes for all. Procedurally, the committee - made of 10 members - meets monthly, visiting sites on a Tuesday for a Thursday meeting. Committee members receive all the paperwork in advance of this and members are expected to study each application. Members do not make decisions on those that they are conflicted, either by their constituency, due to personal matters, or where they did not attend a site visit. So what is my vision as such for chair? Well, although the committee and chair role are somewhat apolitical, I maintain we should have a direction or vision as to our role within the planning system under the current law and any future revisions. So first it involves forming and leading a strong committee that clearly articulates its decisions. As chair I would support committee members in their work, especially new members who will have a lot of learning to do, but also set expectations as to their conduct in meetings. I will keep under review how the committee deliberates and ultimately makes and captures the reasons for decisions. This may involve a review of our minutes and how the committee members contribute to appeals when there is an independent inspector reviewing their decisions. Secondly, it is to inform policy and support its development. The Planning Committee are at the front line of delivering policy and decisions, with the last committee making over 400 determinations on applications or reviews. We are a useful resource to know what is working and what can be improved. Many of us recognise the planning system could be simpler and streamlined, without compromising quality or sustainable development. The committee should play a greater role in informing policy, such as supplementary guidance or the Island Plan. As chair I would seek to have regular meetings with the Minister and their planning policy team to ensure we contribute the committee's experiences directly into improving the system and our policies. In an ideal world the decision of the department would match that of the committee, which would match that of an inspector, and ultimately that of a Minister. This would not come from blindly following recommendations, but a system of continuous learning where committee decisions inform the department's balance of policy, and likewise where the inspector gives due weight to the rationale of the committee. Island Plan policies are set and agreed by this Assembly and it should be Assembly Members' deliberations on the committee that bed in how best these work in practice. Third, supporting the department and using our powers to build trust in the system. Trust in our planning system grows when our processes are fair, quick and consistent. Members will know the frustration Islanders feel when they see inconsistent application of policy, and this is especially true in compliance and enforcement. I want the committee to use its powers to bring compliance action

quickly where it is in the public interest, and I would include compliance and enforcement as a routine item on our meetings. This would mean using our powers to serve enforcement notices and other powers it holds under the law. One area that is increasingly challenging for good decision-making and ensuring public policies are delivered is the impact of extant yet unfinished permissions. There are countless prominent sites with historic planning permissions that, because work has started, could still be finished, even when approved decades ago. The committee has found that this has been used as a material consideration on new applications, and this creates tension when assessing applications against the current policies. It also gets in the way of orderly development of land, such as the delivery of new homes.

[14:45]

As such, I will be reviewing the powers the committee may exercise under Article 26 of the law, which provides a lawful mechanism to terminate planning permission that has started but not finished. Any use of these powers will be carefully thought through to ensure they deliver in the public interest, and that site owners are given sufficient time to complete the developments that they have the permission to deliver. I will be reviewing what this process may look like with the department to ensure we, as a committee, can deliver a robust and fair process. It should be on sound application of the existing law and its enforcement that this Assembly can have faith that future changes can be made. Ultimately, why choose me as Planning Committee chair; although the competition looks lighter than when I wrote this? Well, work on the Planning Committee requires deep and thorough knowledge of the policies and procedures at play, and it is essential that the chair of the Planning Committee exemplifies this. Those who know me will know that I study planning policy and planning law to great detail. I hold the knowledge, interest, and capability to lead the committee from day one. I have demonstrated in my work so far that I put planning policy ahead of my personal opinions. Finally, for those interested, work on the Planning Committee is not easy. The tensions I describe are real and they weigh heavily on committee members. That said, fulfilling the committee's obligations as a democratic steward of our Island's resources by following law and process is richly rewarding and one I encourage Members to consider discussing with me. I welcome any questions and hope Members will support me in leading the Planning Committee this term.

[Approbation]

The Bailiff:

Are there any questions for Deputy Curtis?

10.1.1 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

I thank the candidate for his speech. I was just wondering if the candidate had any views on the future role of the Planning Committee. Does he think that the Planning Committee is in itself a worthwhile enterprise, or does he think there are other systems which may suit the Island better?

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I thank the Deputy for the question. I think the Planning Committee role is essential and, as I referenced in my speech, I believe having democratically elected individuals accountable for decisions is essential, and that carries through to when inspectors review decisions. It is still a Minister who has to be accountable for the final decision. There are ways we can review it. As we have bedded in the inspector model since 2014 or 2016 we are seeing some tension where ultimately committee decisions or interpretation of policy have not always historically aligned with how inspectors read policy. But again that comes back to understanding where a policy is set, which is a Minister and the Assembly, but ultimately in the bedding in of that I think the committee is the right place to work that through. A well-functioning committee, which articulates and details its reasons for decision, can remain relevant and the right model into the future.

10.1.2 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South:

Congratulations on the appointment. One of the tensions that I came across repeatedly on the doorstep, obviously St. Helier South is one of the most built-up areas and continues to be, and there is a frustration from residents when they are not allowed to speak at appeal. Now, I accept that a lot of their objections have already been submitted but how would Deputy Curtis either listen to their objections again or reassure them that they are still being taken into consideration, because there is a view that if they are not allowed to speak then again that they are not being taken into account.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Just for clarity, the committee make decisions on those contentious and larger applications and requests to review refusals by applicants. However, there is that third layer which is when an independent inspector holds a hearing. I appreciate that ... I attend sometimes as the committee representing, and then we sit like a neighbour or like an applicant would, and it can be frustrating. I would like to see, through conversations with the Minister of the day, how best we ensure that there is still representation in that stage, and especially for the committee, because the committee may well be representing a decision based on the evidence neighbours provided. I went and represented a decision for the committee which went against the department for the Deputy's district only recently, and I think making sure the committee show up well to those will help us inform the Minister on the appeals process. I want to be deeply involved to help that representation.

10.1.3 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South:

As a member of the committee for the last 4 years, I am interested to know how the chair is going to liaise with the department to ensure that the right amount of information is provided to the committee for making decisions. One of the biggest challenges we face is the shift of employment land and that proof of redundancy.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

The Deputy is quite right that the level of information we require on certain applications needs to be consistent. The committee has been strong on employment land and the justification of marketing. What I would like to do is sit down with the department, and ultimately the Minister, and be clear on what the committee expects in that information. I reckon the committee has seen many areas where oversubscription of information is provided by applicants, and I think there is simplification there. But one area which could be better that the Deputy references is justifying redundancy on employment land. It is an area that we as a committee have been strong on, and it should not be the case applications come to us that are refused due to inadequate information. It really should be the case the committee explains to the department, who then in turn through pre-application advice strongly encourage applications: "This is the level of information you need." It comes back to the fact that the committee are not looking for information to tick a box; it is looking for information that genuinely informs why plans come forward. It should not be for marketing evidence to show that land is redundant simply because that is what the applicant wants; it should test genuinely what the correct use of land is. If we can join that back up to the department I think the committee can receive the right information early doors, and hopefully applicants can understand their expectations for the site earlier.

10.1.4 Senator I.J. Gorst:

There are many reasons of course why developers are not developing, but the greatest one I think can be put down to uncertainty and the costs thereof. While it is not simply a decision by the committee - as the Member knows from the conversations we have had, it is throughout the whole process - there is a part that the committee can play in delivering more certain decisions. I wonder if the chair could just give us an overview of his understanding and how he thinks the committee could deliver greater certainty to those making applications and to developers.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I think the Senator will recognise that the former Minister's work improved certainty, speed of application, and the use of pre-application advice has been part of that. The committee's role in that comes back to how I try to articulate consistency in decision making. If the Planning Committee consistently weigh the balance of policy different to the department, that is where some uncertainty comes from. The solution there is not for the Planning Committee to, as I say, blindly follow recommendations from the department, it is for the relationship between the committee and the department to be two-way to inform the conversations the department have with applicants early on. So when an applicant seeks pre-application advice on a site - and this would be my call to all applicants and prospective applicants now, to engage early with the department - the department should have a clear understanding as to how the committee, as decision-makers, balance policy, so that when we do see advice given it is advice in line with the committee's balance. So when they hopefully get a recommendation of approval from the department it align with a set of votes in approval by the committee.

10.1.5 Deputy I.J. Gorst:

I thank the chair for his answer. Of course in the answer he really articulates where the problem is. The decision should not be dependent upon the whims of the committee; it should be dependent upon the policy in the entire process. I wonder if the chair could give us some ideas of the problem he articulated and the solutions that he thinks there might be in place, because going for pre-application advice and getting one answer, spending several hundred thousand pounds at the end of the process and getting another, which is what is happening ... there has to be some change to that process and I wonder if he could articulate what he thinks that change could usefully be.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I can try. I would push back though that I do not believe decisions made by the committee are on a whim. The Senator will know that planning policy is about balance, it is well-established in Jersey planning law and the cases taken throughout our modern appeal system, that it is reasonable for a decision-maker to balance policy, and it is also expected that there will be cases where that balance of policy is different. The Senator may know of cases where a department would want approval, a committee would want approval, and it would be an independent inspector that goes to refuse it. I do not think anyone would describe the decision by the inspector as a whim. All I can go back to saying is it is about consistency of understanding as to where that balance falls. Where we see tension around the density of development perhaps, or the interpretation ... a classic one would be the interpretation as to what is a disproportionate increase on development outside the built-up area, policy H9. Where decisions are made, it is not simply right for the Planning Committee to have their balance and it not inform the department. I am aware of a recent decision the Planning Committee made and I was heartened to hear that the department were using that decision as a way of benchmarking their advice to applicants in pre-application advice, or in revisions to applications. That is the right way it can work. The policies are there, our department are the experts in the policy, but it is still fair to say that, as I say, planning policy is never purely technical, and it is a balance that we must bed in as a group of decision-makers to be consistent.

10.1.6 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

When it comes to the human rights protocol on Article 1 of enjoying one's property, or indeed Article 8 rights about the respect for private family life and enjoying one's property without undue state interference, does the soon-to-be-chair of the Planning Committee believe that when it comes to that tied vote he talked about - a 2:2 for example - that the presumption should be in favour of the developer given the fact that the presumption should be that you have the right to enjoy your property and develop it without interference from the state, unless there is a good reason, rather than the default being the status quo?

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

What I would say to that is the rights outlined by Deputy Tadier are still qualified rights in how they are interpreted. When the Planning and Building Law was lodged around 2002, but it came into play with the Ministerial system in 2005, those were no doubt considered in the lodging of the law. Down to the specific decision, I take it that if a group come to a tied vote there is insufficient weight to be confident in that decision. It is always on the applicant to be able to apply for something different. It works both ways. When an enforcement notice - if the committee adopt those powers - were to be decided in the neutral, in the tie, then no enforcement would be taken. That would be a case where the applicant or the person perhaps in breach is being given again the benefit of the doubt in the confidence of the decision. The Deputy might know that if an application is refused, the applicant is given a free re-application by the department to go once more within 6 months, and I think that works well as a way of ensuring that feedback is taken on board. But the law is clear as to why it has its purpose. It does, therefore, demonstrate the qualified nature of those and, as such, I do not see a need to change that right now.

10.1.7 Deputy M. Tadier:

I think it remains a point for debate but would the chair be open to discussing that in future if the evidence is found to be the other way around?

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I am more than happy to discuss and, in general, I would love to see States Members who are not to join a committee, come, watch the process, watch the protocol, and then actively engage in conversations as to how the committee is the best fit for decision-making long into the future.

10.1.8 Deputy K.F. Morel:

I am hoping that during the course of the following 4 years we will have the joy of an Island Plan debate. I was wondering if the chair sees the Planning Committee playing any role in that.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

At the moment the remit for the Planning Committee is defined in law. The Planning Committee is there to reflect on policy and it has a statutory duty to report on how policy works and is not working within 3 months of the end of a calendar year to the Minister. I see merit in the Planning Committee, perhaps through the chair, having a greater say in the shape of that. The Deputy will no doubt be aware that in the last sitting of the States Assembly change has been brought to allow for the next Island Plan or revisions. However, they are to be agreed by regulations still and perhaps when we look at those regulations we can decide is there a role for the Planning Committee in working with the Minister. I reflect on what I heard on the door and what I heard in hustings on Senators, and particularly in St. Clement, that the Ministerial system alone may want review.

[15:00]

I think one area where we may choose to review how we bring in more voices from the Assembly would be the Planning Committee. But until we bring such regulations and until the Assembly have a view on that, I believe the role of the committee is to inform and not decide on policy.

10.1.9 Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

I did not realise I was going to be up so quickly. There is clearly so much enthusiasm. Could I ask the candidate what his views are and explain the detail of the economic test and how the panel would view such matters when determining an application?

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

The Senator may be aware that the former Minister for the Environment and former Minister for Sustainable Economic Development were working to better quantify how economic value feeds into planning applications. The committee has weighed information in various forms, including business plans, and receive all unredacted information. That includes, for example, on recent large applications where we had that. What I would like to see the committee have at hand is evidence from perhaps the Chief Economist or the Economics Department, which we have had. But what I would stress the committee I expect will want is impartial and honest advice. We want our statutory consultees in the case of, for example, economics, rural, historic, to always provide their objective view. We know that we will have bodies that will be actively promoting a position and it is for statutory consultees to be objective. When we can trust that then I think it helps us make a decision. When it comes to the economic test it really is about the economic value of the development once developed, and that the economic value of construction is something that in planning policy terms is given very little weight by planning decisions. It is the value once in its future economic use that the Planning Committee no doubt will be assessing against.

The Bailiff:

Are there any further questions for Deputy Curtis? If there are no more questions then I can confirm that Deputy Curtis has been appointed as chair of the Planning Committee. **[Approbation]** The completes the items on the Order Paper.

ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Bailiff:

Deputy Alves, as chair of P.P.C., I would now normally consult you about future public business. There is one item on the Order Paper. Any observations you want to make about the business on 14th July or not?

11. Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central:

I do not have any observations at this point other than I hope that Members will approach the committee chairs that they wish to express an interest in, and unless anybody else has got any other comments I propose the arrangement of public business.

The Bailiff:

Are Members content to adjourn? The Assembly stands adjourned until 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 14th July.

ADJOURNMENT

[15:03]