4.8 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South of the Minister for Economic Development regarding consideration of a commercial tenancy law. (OQ.95/2926)

Will the Minister advise whether he has given any consideration to a commercial tenancy law to provide assurance and certainty to businesses with commercial tenancies, and if not, why not?

Deputy F.G. Voisin of St. Helier North (The Minister for Economic Development):

This is not yet something which I have given detailed consideration to, but I would be happy to discuss this with the local business community. I am however, aware of the proposition P.68/2025, as amended, which called for a review into commercial leases and the provision of a set of best practice principles for commercial landlords and tenants. Much of this information is already provided online by local property law firms. However, Jersey Business have also been undertaking work in this area as part of their ongoing business advisory support. This has included a workshop hosted in September, with a second due in November. These have included representatives from commercial tenants, commercial real estate firms and local property lawyers, and I look forward to understanding the outcomes of this work in due course.

4.8.1 Deputy T.A. Coles:

Given the first contract most commercial tenants enter is normally the one that is most descriptive and easiest to understand, the challenge is after, if that lease is for a 9-year term, that once you have been in Jersey and established for 9 years, it is that second one that becomes the challenge to renegotiate, because the landlord has all of the weight in their favour. You either have to leave your successful business location to find somewhere else. Does he not believe there needs to be a better balanced structure to support businesses so they can invest further in their businesses?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think with the number of empty commercial properties at the moment, there is every incentive for the landlord to renew a lease at the end of a 9-year term, but if a businessperson wishes to have more support and guidance when renewing the lease, then they can receive that from Jersey Business.