STATES OF JERSEY

OFFICIAL REPORT

TUESDAY, 10th NOVEMBER 2026

COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER 9

1.1 Welcome to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor 9

1.2 Tribute to former Deputy Gerard Baudains 9

APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS, COMMITTEES AND PANELS 10

2. Resignation of Deputy C.D. Leck of St. Saviour from the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel 10

QUESTIONS 10

3. Written Questions 10

3.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding essential worker accommodation. (WQ.219/2026) 10

3.2 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning regarding d'Auvergne School operating below capacity. (WQ. 220/2026) 15

3.3 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier of the Minister for Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries regarding expenditure from the Climate Emergency Fund. (WQ.221/2026) ... 16

3.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Social Security regarding the proposal to increase (WQ.222/2026) 18

3.5 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Chief Minister regarding measures of efficiency across departments. (WQ.223/2026) 19

3.6 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding Part 11 of the Jersey Immigration Rules. (WQ.224/2026) 20

3.7 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning regarding the total number of individuals who have attended courses funded by the Skills Development Fund. (WQ.226/2026) 22

3.8 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the Social Security (Reserve) Fund. (WQ.227/2026) 22

3.9 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Minister for Housing regarding the Affordable Housing Gateway. (WQ.228/2026) 25

3.10 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Planning and Regulation regarding hazards in agricultural workers' accommodation. (WQ.229/2026) 27

3.11 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the current arrangements for access to consultant neurology care. (WQ.230/2026) 28

3.12 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding hospital consultant staffing. (WQ.231/2026) 29

3.13 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the Government of Jersey Social Impact Report for 2025. (WQ.232/2026) 34
3.14 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for External Relations regarding the Sustainable Finance Action Plan. (WQ.233/2026) 36
3.15 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the Treasury Advisory Panel's work on aligning the Common Investment Fund with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. (WQ.234/2026) 39
3.16 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding violence against women and girls funding. (WQ.235/2026) 43
3.17 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Social Security regarding the structural deficit in the Health Insurance Fund. (WQ.236/2026) 48
3.18 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding an income-based rental policy for Andium Homes. (WQ.237/2026) 48
3.19 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Social Security regarding abolishing the Social Security Cap. (WQ.238/2026) 49
3.20 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central of the Chief Minister regarding the publication of Freedom of Information requests and responses. (WQ.239/2026) 50
3.22 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Children and Families regarding children on the Jersey Exploitation Pathway. (WQ.241/2026) 54
3.23 Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning regarding expenditure on student finance support for higher education. (WQ. 242/2026) 54
3.24 Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning regarding applications received for higher education student finance. (WQ.243/2026) . 59
3.25 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the proposed increases in Long-Term Care (LTC) contribution rates from 2028. (WQ.244/2026) 61
3.26 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the delay to Phase 1 of the redevelopment of Fort Regent. (WQ.245/2026) 62
3.27 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the medicines regulatory framework. (WQ.246/2026) 64
3.28 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the recurring savings included in the Proposed Budget 2027-2030. (WQ.247/2026) 68
3.29 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Chief Minister regarding each strategic priority set out in the Common Strategic Policy 2026-2030. (WQ.248/2026) 70
3.30 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) legislation and its impact on the criminal justice system. (WQ.249/2026) 70

4. Oral Questions 73

4.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Chief Minister regarding structures, capacity and capability of the public sector. (OQ.114/2026) 73

Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister): 73
4.1.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson: 74
4.1.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 74
4.1.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 74
4.1.4 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier: 74

4.1.5 The Connétable of St. Helier: 74
4.1.6 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central: 75
4.1.7 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 75
4.1.8 Deputy K.M. Wilson: 75

4.2 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Housing regarding assisted home ownership schemes. (OQ.118/2026) 76

Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour (The Minister for Housing): 76
4.2.1 Deputy C.S. Alves: 76
4.2.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 76
4.2.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 76
4.2.4 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 77
4.2.5 Deputy M. Tadier: 77
4.2.6 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central: 77
4.2.7 Deputy L.V. Feltham: 77
4.2.8 Deputy C.S. Alves: 78

4.3 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Chief Minister regarding residential and nursing home capacity. (OQ.121/2026) 78

Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister): 78
4.3.1 Deputy S.J. Gleave: 78
4.3.2 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier: 79
4.3.3 The Connétable of St. Helier: 79

4.4 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding additional consultant neurology capacity. (OQ.111/2026) 79

Senator T.J.A. Binet (The Minister for Health and Social Services): 79
4.4.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham: 80
4.4.2 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter: 80
4.4.3 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson: 80
4.4.4 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 80
4.4.5 Deputy M. Tadier: 81
4.4.6 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement: 81
4.4.7 Deputy K.M. Wilson: 81
4.4.8 Deputy L.V. Feltham: 82

4.5 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée of St. Helier South of the Chief Minister regarding the International Cultural Centre (OQ.109/2026) 82

Senator H.M. Miles (Assistant Chief Minister - rapporteur): 82
4.5.1 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée: 82
4.5.2 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier: 83
4.5.3 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central: 83
4.5.4 Deputy C.S. Alves: 83
4.5.5 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée: 83

4.6 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for Planning and Regulation regarding the Jersey Care Commission's reduction in budget. (OQ.104/2026) 84

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat (The Minister for Planning and Regulation): 84
4.6.1 Deputy M. Tadier: 84
4.6.2 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central: 84
4.6.3 Deputy L.V. Feltham: 85
4.6.4 Deputy M. Tadier: 85

4.7 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St Helier North of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding private rental income. (OQ.116/2026) 86

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean (The Minister for Treasury and Resources): 86
4.7.1 Deputy M.B. Andrews: 86

4.8 Deputy L.D. Carpenter of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Housing regarding Andium home exchanges and refusals of housing offers. (OQ.107/2026) 86

Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour (The Minister for Housing): 87
4.8.1 Deputy L.D. Carpenter: 87
4.8.2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 87
4.8.3 Deputy M. Tadier: 88
4.8.4 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central: 88
4.8.5 Deputy C.S. Alves: 88
4.8.6 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South: 89
4.8.7 Deputy S.J. Gleave: 89
4.8.8 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement: 89
4.8.9 Deputy K.M. Wilson: 90

4.9 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Economic Development regarding industries he wishes to attract to Jersey. (OQ.107/2026) 90

Deputy F.G. Voisin of St. Helier North (The Minister for Economic Development): 90
4.9.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 90
4.9.2 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central: 91
4.9.3 Deputy L.V. Feltham: 91
4.9.4 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 91
4.9.5 Deputy M. Tadier: 92
4.9.6 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 92

4.10 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Planning and Regulation regarding identified hazards. (OQ.112/2026) 93

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat (The Minister for Planning and Regulation): 93
4.10.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham: 93
4.10.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 93
4.10.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 94
4.10.4 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement: 94
4.10.5 Deputy K.M. Wilson: 95
4.10.6 Deputy L.V. Feltham: 95

4.11 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Economic Development regarding employment protections. 95

Deputy F.G. Voisin of St. Helier North (The Minister for Economic Development): 95
4.11.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 96
4.11.2 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement: 96
4.11.3 Deputy A.F. Curtis: 96
4.11.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 96

4.12 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Chief Minister regarding the Common Strategic Policy. (OQ.122/2026) 97

Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister): 97
4.12.1 Deputy S.J. Gleave: 97

4.12.2 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement: 97
4.12.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 98
4.12.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 98
4.12.5 Deputy S.J. Gleave: 98

4.13 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the reasoning behind the decision of the Council of Ministers not to reinstate the full States Grant to the Social Security Fund before 2030. (OQ.105/2026) 99

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean (The Minister for Treasury and Resources): 99

4.14 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Minister for Children and Families regarding exploitation and grooming of children in Jersey. (OQ.115/2026) 99

Connétable R.P. Vibert of St. Peter (The Minister for Children and Families): 99
4.14.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson: 100
4.14.2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 100
4.14.3 Deputy K.M. Wilson: 100

4.15 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding the rehabilitation of offenders. (OQ.120/2026) 101

Senator H.M. Miles (The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs): 101
4.15.1 Deputy M. Tadier: 101
4.15.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 101
4.15.3 Deputy M. Tadier: 102

4.16 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée of St. Helier South of the Minister for Economic Development regarding the performance of the DFDS ferry service. (OQ.110/2026) 102

Deputy F.G. Voisin of St. Helier North (The Minister for Economic Development): 102
4.16.1 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée: 102
4.16.2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 102
4.16.3 Deputy M. Tadier: 103
4.16.4 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée: 103

4.17 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Housing regarding the Homelessness Cluster. (OQ.119/2026) 103

Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour (The Minister for Housing): 103
4.17.1 Deputy C.S. Alves: 104
4.17.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 104
4.17.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 104
4.17.4 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South: 104
4.17.5 Deputy T.A. Coles: 105
4.17.6 Deputy C.S. Alves: 105

4.18 Deputy L.D. Carpenter of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Housing regarding assessments of homes currently advertised for sale. (OQ.117/2026) 105

Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour (The Minister for Housing): 105

5. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Minister for Social Security 106

5.1 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 106
Senator M.E. Millar (The Minister for Social Security): 106
5.1.1 Deputy M. Tadier: 106

5.2 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South: 107
5.2.1 Deputy T.A. Coles: 107
5.3 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central: 107
5.3.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham: 107
5.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 107
5.4.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 108
5.5 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South: 108
5.5.1 Deputy S.J. Gleave: 109
5.6 Deputy B. Ward of St. Clement: 109

6. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Minister for Economic Development .. 109

6.1 Deputy L.D. Carpenter of St. Helier Central: 110
Deputy F.G. Voisin of St. Helier North (The Minister for Economic Development): 110
6.1.1 Deputy L.D. Carpenter: 110
6.2 Deputy G.A. Raimondo of St. Brelade: 110
6.2.1 Deputy G.A. Raimondo: 111
6.3 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South: 111
6.3.1 Deputy S.J. Gleave: 111
6.4 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central: 111
6.4.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham: 112
6.5 Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North: 112
6.5.1 Deputy V. Li: 112
6.6 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement: 113

7. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Chief Minister 113

7.1 Deputy M. Tadier: 113
Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister): 113
7.1.1 Deputy M. Tadier: 113
7.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 114
7.2.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 114
7.3 Deputy B. Ward of St. Clement: 114
7.3.1 Deputy B. Ward: 115
7.4 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South: 115
7.4.1 Deputy T.A. Coles: 115
7.5 Deputy T.A. Coles: 116
7.6 Deputy M. Tadier: 116
7.7 Deputy T.A. Coles: 116
7.7.1 Deputy T.A. Coles: 116
7.8 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement: 117
7.8.1 Deputy A.F. Curtis: 117

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT PROPOSED 117
LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT 117
STATEMENTS ON A MATTER OF OFFICIAL RESPONSIBILITY 117

8. The Minister for Infrastructure will give a statement regarding the States of Jersey Complaints Board: findings (R.139/2026) 117

8.1 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade (The Minister for Infrastructure): 117
8.1.1 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central: 119
8.1.2 Deputy C.S. Alves: 119
8.1.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 119

8.1.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune: 120
8.1.5 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 120
8.1.6 Deputy M. Tadier: 120
8.1.7 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South: 120
8.1.8 Deputy T.A. Coles: 121
8.1.9 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement: 121
8.1.10 Deputy C.J. Rebindaine of St Mary, St Ouen and St Peter: 121
8.1.11 Deputy C.J. Rebindaine: 122
8.1.12 Deputy J. Renouf: 122

PUBLIC BUSINESS 122

9. Reduction of lodging period 122

9.1 Senator M.R. Le Hegarat (The Minister for the Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries): 122

10. Common Strategic Policy 2026 – 2030 (P.75/2026) - as amended 123

Senator L.J. Farnham (Chief Minister): 123
10.1 Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister): 125

10.2 Common Strategic Policy 2026 – 2030 (P.75/2026): twenty-second amendment (P.75/2026 Amd.(22)) - Subsequent Common Strategic Policy 126

10.2.1 Deputy C.J. Rebindaine of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter: 127
10.2.2 Senator L.J. Farnham: 128
10.2.3 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South: 130
10.2.4 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central: 131
10.2.5 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade: 133
10.2.6 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: 133
10.2.7 Deputy C.J. Rebindaine: 134

10.3 Common Strategic Policy 2026 – 2030 (P.75/2026): twentieth amendment (P.75/2026 Amd.(20)) - Island-wide outcomes data for schools 136

10.3.1 Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North: 137
10.3.2 Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning): 139
10.3.3 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 140
10.3.4 Deputy C.J. Rebindaine of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter: 140
10.3.5 Senator Sir M.J. Boleat: 140
10.3.6 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier: 140
10.3.7 Deputy V. Li: 141

10.4 Common Strategic Policy 2026 – 2030 (P.75/2026): twenty-fourth amendment (P.75/2026 Amd.(24)) - Remove the provision for more homes 144

10.4.1 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement: 144
10.4.2 Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour: 146
10.4.3 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South: 147
10.4.4 Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John: 147
10.4.5 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity: 148
10.4.6 Connétable R.D. Johnson of St. Mary: 149
10.4.7 Deputy A.F. Curtis: 149

10.5 Common Strategic Policy 2026 - 2030 (P.75/2026): twelfth amendment (P.75/2026 Amd.(12)) - Increase Government transparency, openness and accountability..... 152

10.5.1 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central: 153
10.5.2 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:..... 156
10.5.3 Senator L.J. Farnham: 156
10.5.4 Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John: 157
10.5.5 Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin:..... 158
10.5.6 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South:..... 159

ADJOURNMENT..... 159

[9:30]

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

COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The Bailiff:

1.1 Welcome to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor

On behalf of Members, I would like to welcome His Excellency to the Chamber this morning. **[Approbation]**

1.2 Tribute to former Deputy Gerard Baudains

Members will be aware that former Deputy Gerard Baudains passed away last month at the age of 79. There is an echo. Is that someone remote who needs to turn off their computer?

Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement:

I think it may be Constable Troy online.

The Bailiff:

Yes. Still some heavy breathing, I think. **[Laughter]** That has been attended to, has it, Greffier? Members will be aware that former Deputy Gerard Baudains passed away last month at the age of 79. Mr. Baudains was born to a St. Clement farming family. He went to Victoria College and trained as an engineer at Farnborough Technical College. He was a highly proficient motor engineer, and his projects included complicated commercial and leisure boat work. He was also an active member of the Jersey Motorcycle and Light Car Club, competing in motorsports, as well as sharing his technical engineering knowledge and skill. He lived most of his life in St. Clement, apart from a spell in the U.K. (United Kingdom), working as a fighting vehicle research development engineer. He also ran his own engineering business from 1975 until 2013. Mr. Baudains was first elected as Deputy for St. Clement in 1998, serving 3 terms, then a break between 2008 and 2011, and then serving a final fourth term until 2014. During his parliamentary career, he served on a number of committees prior to the introduction of Ministerial Government; Housing and Telecom, and latterly P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) and the Planning Committee. He developed a reputation for detailed examination of policy and a willingness to challenge established views. He was a strong advocate for transparency, accountability and the role of elected Members in decision-making. He was particularly associated with debates concerning Jersey's system of government, repeatedly arguing for greater involvement of elected Members and a return to the committee system. Throughout his time in office, he championed issues affecting parishioners in St. Clement, including opposition to rezoning of farming land for development and the protection of interests of the community within that Parish. He pursued proposals relating to public sector reform, the machinery of government, higher education grants and measures intended to strengthen public accountability. He was widely known for his independence of thought, his forthright contribution to debate, and his determination to represent the views of those who had elected him. Whether Members agreed with him or not, there was never any doubt as to the sincerity of his convictions and his commitment to Scrutiny and dedication to public life. Indeed, after he left the States, he stood unsuccessfully for election to Senator and Connétable. Outside the States, he was a member of the Management Committee of Le Squez Youth Club from 1998 and a council member for the Jersey Lifeboat Association. Drawing on his extensive technical skills, he, along with his son, recently helped redesign the power input from the engine of the J.L.A. (Jersey Lifeboat Association) lifeboat. Last week saw that boat's commission and we join his family in their sadness that Mr. Baudains was not there to see the vessel launched. Mr. Baudains's daughter told us that after his retirement, if he was not busy in his workshop or working on the farm, you would likely find him working on his boats or shooting or tackling some complex engineering problem he had set himself. He was never one for

sitting still, and his ingenuity and determination in everything he did were second to none. On behalf of all Members, I extend our sincere condolences to his friends, family and all who knew him. I ask Members to stand for a moment's reflection. **[Silence]** May he rest in peace.

[9:45]

APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS, COMMITTEES AND PANELS

2. Resignation of Deputy C.D. Leck of St. Saviour from the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

The Bailiff:

Under F, I can announce that Deputy Leck has resigned from the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

QUESTIONS

3. Written Questions

3.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding essential worker accommodation. (WQ.219/2026)

Question

"Further to the response to Written Question 194/2026, will the Minister provide the following information regarding all essential worker accommodation owned, leased, funded or otherwise held for his department's use (including at Hue Court, Westaway Court and Plaisant Court) and accommodation managed on its behalf by another department or body –

(a) as at 30th September 2026, the total number of accommodation units, broken down by site and bedroom size, separately identifying rooms in shared accommodation, and stating how many were occupied and how many were unoccupied, including those reserved for future occupants;

(b) for those unoccupied units, the duration and reason for each vacancy, whether the accommodation was habitable, and any confirmed or anticipated occupation date, distinguishing accommodation reserved for incoming health staff from any held for hospital construction workers;

(c) the total rent, service charges and other costs incurred during periods of vacancy between 1st January and 30th September 2026, broken down by site and type of expenditure, together with the ongoing monthly cost of the units unoccupied on 30th September; and

(d) what assessment has been made of the number of units required to meet forthcoming staffing needs and the value for money of retaining unoccupied accommodation?"

Answer

Taken as written, this question demands, in parts, a degree of detail that seems both unreasonable and unnecessary.

Whilst the democratic right to information must be upheld, given that our government information structure is not yet highly digitised, these questions require some information that would not be possible to collate in the time available and, furthermore, the process would prove expensive. Enhanced digitisation is an objective I am pursuing across the Health Department.

In order to substantiate this, the following information and comments are provided on each of the sections requested –

(a) as at 30th September 2026, the total number of accommodation units, broken down by site and bedroom size, separately identifying rooms in shared accommodation, and stating how many were occupied and how many were unoccupied, including those reserved for future occupants;

The total number of accommodation units – see table (a) below

Accommodation units broken down by site – see table (a) below

Bedroom size – the accommodation portfolio consists of 388 units. No record of bedroom sizes is known to exist. This part of the question would require each of the bedrooms to be physically measured. This would be time consuming, expensive, and arguably, produce information of no useful value.

Units occupied and unoccupied on 30th September 2026 – see table (a) below

Units reserved for future occupants – see table (a) below

(b) for those unoccupied units, the duration and reason for each vacancy, whether the accommodation was habitable, and any confirmed or anticipated occupation date, distinguishing accommodation reserved for incoming health staff from any held for hospital construction workers;

Duration and reason for each vacancy of each unoccupied unit – see table (b) below

Is accommodation habitable - see table (b) below

Confirmed or anticipated occupation date – N/A

Reserved for incoming health staff or held for hospital construction workers - see table (b) below

(c) the total rent, service charges and other costs incurred during periods of vacancy between 1st January and 30th September 2026, broken down by site and type of expenditure, together with the ongoing monthly cost of the units unoccupied on 30th September; and

Total rent, service charges and other costs incurred during periods of vacancy between 1st January and 30th September 2026, - this is not available in the form requested, in the time permitted

Ongoing monthly cost of the units unoccupied on 30th September – see table (c) below

Please note that specific accommodation site addresses have not been included. This is to protect the privacy of those living in that accommodation and so as not to publish details about vacant accommodation which could prejudice the public interest.

Table (a)

Accommodation type	Units	Occupied	Unoccupied	Of which reserved
Rooms in shared accommodation	124	64	60	6
Bed-sits	81	57	24	11
1-bedroom	99	95	4	3
2-bedroom	58	33	25	5
3-bedroom	18	10	8	0
4-bedroom	2	1	1	1
5-bedroom	1	0	1	1
Bedroom size not specified	5	4	1	1
Total	**388**	**264**	**124**	**28**

Table (b)

Property	Duration of Vacancy	Reason	Habitable (Yes/No)
Property 1	2 months	Held for construction worker accommodation	Y
Property 2	2 months	Held for construction worker accommodation	Y
Property 3	1 year +	Awaiting refurbishment	N
Property 4	1 year +	Awaiting refurbishment	N
Property 5	1 year +	Awaiting refurbishment	N
Property 6	1 year +	Awaiting refurbishment	N

Property 7	1 year +	Awaits refurb to office accommodation	N
Property 8	1 year +	Awaiting refurbishment	N
Property 9	1 year +	Awaits refurb to office accommodation	N
Property 10	1 year +	Awaits refurb to office accommodation	N
Property 11	1 month	Awaiting refurbishment	Y
Property 12	1 year +	Awaits refurb to office accommodation	N
Property 13	1 year +	Awaits refurb to office accommodation	N

Table (c)

Property	Unoccupied units	Recorded ongoing monthly cost
Property 3	1	0
Property 4	1	0
Property 5	1	0
Property 6	1	0
Property 7	1	0
Property 8	1	0
Property 9	1	0
Property 10	1	0
Property 11	1	£1414.66
Property 12	1	0
Property 13	1	0
Property 14	1	£1,345.00
Property 15	5	£3,315.35
Property 16	7	£4,469.64
Property 17	2	£1,260.72
Property 18	4	£7,210.08
Property 19	5	£6,607.91
Property 20	18	£23,005.40
Property 21	9	£9,367.41

Property 22	8	£13,919.08
Property 23	10	£8,787.96
Property 24	7	£4,773.02
Property 25	3	£1,897.83
Property 26	24	£24,900.10
Property 27	2	£1,829.06
Property 28	6	£8,226.82
Property 29	4	£3,420.44
Property 30	6	£5,682.71
Total	**121**	**£131,433.19**

(d) what assessment has been made of the number of units required to meet forthcoming staffing needs and the value for money of retaining unoccupied accommodation?

The accommodation provision is retained as part of our overall workforce strategy to support the recruitment and retention of staff, particularly those relocating to Jersey where access to suitable and affordable housing can present a significant challenge. The availability of accommodation helps ensure that the organisation can attract essential workers in hard-to-recruit roles and respond flexibly to changing workforce demands.

While some accommodation units may be temporarily unoccupied at any given time due to maintenance, refurbishment, tenant turnover, or alignment with future recruitment plans, the value-for-money assessment considers the wider benefits of maintaining housing capacity. These include reduced recruitment risks, improved staff retention, lower reliance on temporary agency workers, and the ability to support service continuity during periods of workforce pressure. The number of units required is kept under regular review through workforce planning processes, and occupancy levels are monitored to ensure that accommodation stock remains aligned with current and forecast staffing needs and represents an appropriate use of public resources

Historically HCJ, struggled to recruit in a number of areas and had to rely heavily on Agency and Locum staff which necessitated the need to increase its property portfolio. Over the last 2 years Agency usage has significantly dropped with no Agency nurses being utilised at the General hospital and medical vacances currently at 24, the lowest it has been for a number of years.

A new Acute Hospital will provide islanders with critical infrastructure. Whilst there will be opportunities for local companies be part of the supply chain, as well as for islanders to work directly for the main contractor (or other organisations), it is anticipated that additional, off-island and specialist workforce will be required.

As a result, HCJ and other government departments have been planning with the NHFP to allocate unused properties to construction workers. This provides a self-evident value for money solution

since it covers the cost of any unoccupied stock as well as avoiding higher construction costs (as the main works delivery partner priced in the risk and cost of accommodation on island). It will also provide an opportunity for HCJ (and other GoJ departments) to prepare to rationalise accommodation portfolios once the peak for NHFP construction workers has passed.

3.2 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning regarding d'Auvergne School operating below capacity. (WQ. 220/2026)

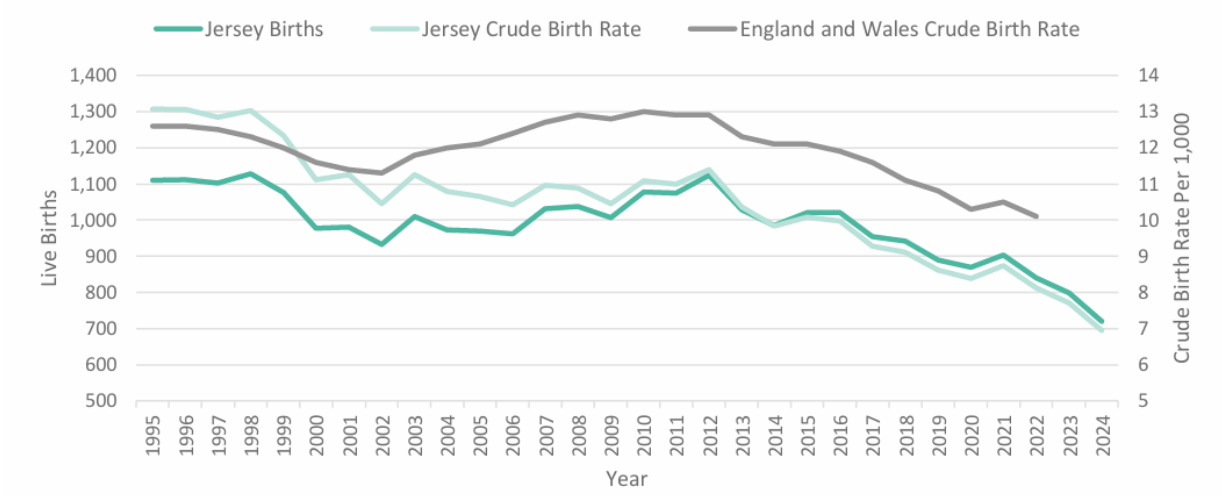
Question

"Will the Minister advise whether d'Auvergne School is currently operating below capacity and, if so, why this is the case and whether there are any plans to increase the number of classes from two to three in each year group?"

Answer

D'Auvergne is operating below its physical capacity as a result of the decline in births across the Island since 2012, as reported in the Births and Breastfeeding Profile 2024, see chart below from the Report.

Figure 9. Crude birth rate (1995 to 2024)



The number of children attending Government of Jersey primary schools has reduced by 9% (584 children), from 6,605 in the 2018/19 academic year to 6,021 in the 2025/26 academic year [i]. As a result, most year groups at d'Auvergne now operate with two classes rather than three.

The additional accommodation available within the school is being used to support other educational priorities. This includes hosting the Play and Learn at d'Auvergne pilot, delivered in partnership with

the Jersey Child Care Trust, which provides nursery provision for 2 to 3-year-olds, as well as additional specialist provision for school aged children.

Allocation of classes per school and per year group are reviewed on an annual basis in line with demand. There are no plans to increase the number of classes from two to three in each year group currently.

The Minister has a duty to ensure that there is available to every child of compulsory school age full-time education appropriate to the child's age, ability and aptitude. The Minister is also required to ensure the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources[ii].

[1] Schools, pupils and their characteristics
[1] Education (Jersey) Law 1999

3.3 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier of the Minister for Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries regarding expenditure from the Climate Emergency Fund. (WQ.221/2026)

Question

"In relation to expenditure from the Climate Emergency Fund (CEF), will the Minister provide –

(a) itemised expenditure from the CEF in years 2024, 2025 and in 2026 to date, including details of any expenditure from the CEF on the Western Bus Gate; and
(b) itemised detail of any expenditure planned for the remainder of 2026 and in 2027?"

Answer

Please see below table which covers Climate Emergency Fund expenditure for 2024, 2025 and 2026 spend and forecast spend.

Planned spend for 2027 will be confirmed in the publication of the Carbon Neutral Roadmap delivery plan for 2027-2030, which will be published by the end of Q1 2027. The intention is that the primary focus will be on supporting Islanders to transition away from fossil fuel heating.

Projects	2024	2025	2026			Total 2024-2026
			Jan to Sep 2026	*Oct to Dec 2026 (forecast)*	2026 Full Year Expenditure (forecast)	
Policy EN1 - Decarbonising Government of Jersey	475,088	124,898	-	*237,867*	237,867	**837,853**

Policy HT1 - Supporting low-carbon heating systems and home insulation	1,160,816	1,583,010	*1,214,299*	*1,285,701*	2,500,000	**5,243,826**
Policy HT3 - Energy Performance Certificates	346,831	103,550	*38,600*	*26,400*	65,000	**515,381**
Policy TR1 - Speeding up the adoption of electric vehicles	3,485,345	205,833	*85,500*	*24,500*	110,000	**3,801,179**
Policy TR3 - Supporting transition fuels	235,616	257,323	*176,296*	*103,704*	280,000	**772,940**
Policy development (incl. staff costs)	211,171	451,120	*332,574*	*215,426*	548,000	**1,210,292**
Offshore wind	383,668	597,859	*217*	-	217	**981,744**
Policy TR9 - Bus service development*	241,997	140,169	*1,029,838*	*8,162*	1,038,000	**1,420,166**
**Of which for Western Bus Gate project*	-	-	*850,000*	-	*850,000*	***850,000***
Policy TR10 - Active travel	66,493	544,791	*21,700*	-	21,700	**632,984**
Policies OE1, EN2, EN4 - Promoting low-carbon lifestyles, creating a Carbon Neutral Network and delivering the COP26 education pledge	192,099	261,165	*161,393*	*153,078*	314,471	**767,735**
Policy EN5 - Blue carbon, biodiversity and sequestration (incl. Marine Spatial Plan and air quality monitoring)	354,280	96,744	*21,608*	-	21,608	**472,632**
TOTAL	**7,153,405**	**4,366,463**	***3,082,025***	***2,054,838***	**5,136,863**	**16,656,731**

Note: Refer to Carbon Neutral Roadmap for relevant policy details.

3.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Social Security regarding the proposal to increase (WQ.222/2026)

Question

"In relation to the proposal to increase the parental grant to £1,800 in the Proposed Budget 2027–2030 and the Common Strategic Policy 2026-2030, will the Minister advise –

(a) what progress she has made in responding to finding 50 and recommendation 20 of the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel's Family Friendly Legislation Review;

(b) whether she will undertake a review of the parental grant eligibility criteria and, if so –

(i) confirm the timeframe for this review, including the commencement date and the end date;
(ii) whether all findings will be published; and
(iii) whether consideration will be given to the options recommended by the Panel's Review, including a needs-based safety-net payment and clear, proactive communication with families; and

(c) the date by which she expects that parents who have experienced barriers accessing the parental grant, as identified in finding 50 of the Panel's Review, will access the grant and detail any support available in the meantime to ineligible parents?"

Answer

(a) The previous Minister for Social Security presented her response to the Scrutiny Panel's Family Friendly Report in March of this year: States Assembly | Scrutiny | Review Government and Share Your Views

This response explained that the Employment, Social Security and Housing Department (ESSH) are advised of all births in the Island to help ensure that parents are receiving the support they need. Where additional support is required for a vulnerable parent, safety net mechanisms are in place to protect the family.

(b) In terms of eligibility for the parental grant, almost all parents qualify for this. For the 3 months from June to August 2026, of 180 children born and registered in this period, a parental grant was paid in respect of 173 children.

The contribution condition is that 3 months of Social Security Contributions have been paid by either parent at any time up to 6 months before the birth or the adoption. In light of the

details above regarding the number of parents who receive the grant, I do not currently propose to review the eligibility for this grant. It is also a fundamental principle of our Social Security system that only those who contribute to the fund receive benefits from it.

(c) As identified by the response to the Panel's report, ESSH are advised of all births. Parents who are not eligible for the parental grant are contacted and their household income and circumstances are assessed to see if they would be eligible for Income Support or other benefits.

Additionally, ESSH are in regular contact with Brighter Futures, and there is a clear route for Brighter Futures to contact the Department if there are any situations that cause them concern.

3.5 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Chief Minister regarding measures of efficiency across departments. (WQ.223/2026)

Question

"Will the Chief Minister advise –

(a) what measures are used across Government departments to assess the efficiency of administrative processes, including processing times, repeat contacts, reopened cases and errors requiring correction;
(b) whether data is collected on the proportion of service requests resolved at first contact without requiring further information or intervention;
(c) whether any assessment has been undertaken of the cost to the Government of repeat contacts, duplicated processes and administrative errors requiring correction;
(d) whether the Government has identified administrative processes that involve multiple departments or repeated submission of the same information by Islanders; and
(e) whether there are any plans to introduce consistent cross-government performance measures to identify opportunities for process simplification, automation and digital transformation and, if so, when these will be introduced?"

Answer

(a) The Annual Performance Report in the 2025 Annual Report and Accounts includes a range of Service Performance Measures that support the assessment of departmental performance and the efficiency of administrative processes, including monitoring customer satisfaction. Measures relating to repeat contacts, reopened cases or errors requiring correction are not included. In addition, individual departments have their own dedicated Service Performance Measures and use their own performance reporting mechanisms, such as the Annual Report prepared by the Jersey Policy Authority, the Quality and Performance Report prepared by Health and Care Jersey, and published Revenue Jersey statistics, to assess the effectiveness of service delivery.

(b) Where applicable, information on the proportion of service requests resolved at first contact without requiring further information or intervention can be noted within individual service request records held by departments.

(c) An assessment has not currently been undertaken of the cost to the Government of repeat contacts, duplicated processes and administrative errors requiring correction. Such an assessment would be challenging to undertake in a meaningful and reliable way because these activities are generally managed as part of the normal operation of existing services and are not routinely recorded as discrete cost categories. In many cases, the resources involved form part of the fixed staffing and operational costs required to deliver a service, regardless of the volume of repeat contacts or corrective activity undertaken. Consequently, it is often difficult to distinguish between costs that are genuinely additional and avoidable, and costs that would continue to be incurred even if repeat contacts, duplicated processes or administrative errors were reduced.

(d) Several processes have been identified that involve multiple departments or repeated submissions for information. This includes customer complaints, data protection and freedom of information requests, and some application processes. Where this is the case, effective triage arrangements and customer engagement processes ensure proper assignment and clear customer service.

(e) As part of our ongoing commitment to deliver a leaner and less complex public sector, we are exploring opportunities to strengthen the use of existing data and reporting arrangements to provide greater visibility of administrative efficiency. While Government departments require performance measures tailored to their individual services, we recognise the potential value of a small number of common indicators that can help identify opportunities for simplification, automation and improved customer experience across the Government where these can be implemented proportionately and cost-effectively.

Departments will continue to identify opportunities for process simplification, automation, digital transformation and the appropriate use of Artificial Intelligence to improve service delivery and operational efficiency. Any future development will seek to balance the benefits of greater consistency with the need to avoid unnecessary administrative burden and to reflect the differing nature of Government services.

In pursuing continuous improvement, departments also have regard to the findings and recommendations of the Controller and Auditor General, the Public Accounts Committee, Scrutiny Panels and the States Assembly.

3.6 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding Part 11 of the Jersey Immigration Rules. (WQ.224/2026)

Question

"In relation to Part 11 of the Jersey Immigration Rules, and specifically Articles 327A, 328, 329 and 345, will the Minister advise –

(a) the status of an individual who arrives in the Island and claims asylum because they fear persecution in their country of origin;

(b) how such claims are handled, whether in practice such asylum claims are processed in Jersey or the UK and whether the person faces being sent to a safe third country;

(c) whether, in her assessment, Jersey currently has appropriate operational and legal arrangements, procedures and resources necessary to determine asylum claims independently;

(d) if Jersey does not currently determine asylum claims in practice, what legal and operational arrangements govern the treatment of an asylum claimant in Jersey (including in respect of accommodation and other essential welfare needs); and

how many individuals have presented themselves to claim asylum in Jersey in the past 5 years, and what proportion have had their claim processed by the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service?"

Answer

(a) Any individual who presents in Jersey and claims asylum is treated as an asylum claimant and is subject to the procedures set out within the Island's immigration and asylum framework. Their claim will be assessed to determine whether it is an admissible claim and whether Jersey has responsibility for considering the claim.

(b) All asylum claims made in Jersey are processed by the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service (JCIS).

Individuals arriving in Jersey on commercial air or sea services will have travelled from a safe country, as Jersey does not have direct international air links from countries that would typically generate significant numbers of asylum claims.

Any individual claiming asylum will initially be subject to an asylum screening interview. Where a claim is determined to be inadmissible, the individual will normally be refused entry and returned to the safe country from which they travelled to Jersey. In such cases, the individual may be detained pending removal. The decision on the validity of the claim is determined by JCIS.

Where a claim is deemed admissible, the individual may be detained pending a substantive asylum interview and a decision on their claim. Decisions on admissible asylum claims are determined by the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs.

(c) Jersey has well established legal and operational arrangements for the consideration of asylum claims. All asylum applications made in Jersey are processed locally by JCIS in accordance with the applicable immigration and asylum framework.

(d) Asylum claims are determined in Jersey. Asylum claimants have no recourse to public funds and are not permitted to undertake employment while their claim is being considered.

During the past five years, five individuals have presented themselves to claim asylum in Jersey.

All five claims were processed by the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service. Accordingly, 100% of asylum claims made in Jersey during this period were processed by JCIS.

In all cases, the asylum claims were unsuccessful, and all 5 individuals were returned to a safe third country.

3.7 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning regarding the total number of individuals who have attended courses funded by the Skills Development Fund. (WQ.226/2026)

Question

"Further to Oral Question 35/2026, will the Minister advise the total number of individuals who have attended courses funded by the Skills Development Fund from March 2026 to date, and will she provide details of the specific courses that have been funded in 2026?"

Answer

Courses funded in 2026:

Scheme	Delegates	Notes
Historic building Maintenance	84	Further courses planned for 2027
Data analysis (2 cohorts)	53	2 further cohorts to run
Scaffolding	38	Further courses planned for 2027
Low Carbon Technician Apprenticeship	9	Further short courses planned for 2027

3.8 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the Social Security (Reserve) Fund. (WQ.227/2026)

Question

"Will the Minister provide the following information –

(a) the total amount of the States Grant to the Social Security Fund that was withheld for the period since the Covid-19 pandemic (March 2020) to date;
(b) the total amount transferred from the Social Security (Reserve) Fund to the Social Security Fund during the same period; and
(c) the estimated current value of the Social Security (Reserve) Fund had the States Grant to the Social Security Fund been applied in full across the same period?"

Answer

a) Since the pandemic, the Government has made contributions to the Social Security Fund through the States Grant that are forecast to reach £131 million by the end of 2026. The amount paid each year is the amount set out in the Social Security Law. States members have taken a number of decisions to set a specific value for the States Grant for a specific year during this time.

When compared with the underlying formula included in the Law, the grants paid represent an adjustment of £422 million. In comparison, taking the latest forecasts into account, during the same period the Social Security (Reserve) Fund will have grown by £548 million.

£000s	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Full States Grant Formula Value	65,300	65,000	80,000	77,000	77,596	90,368	97,027	552,291
States Grant allocated	-	-	-	-	77,596	30,368	22,768	130,732
Total adjustment	**65,300**	**65,000**	**80,000**	**77,000**	**-**	**60,000**	**74,259**	**421,559**

The adjustments made during this period reflect the strong financial position of the Social Security (Reserve) Fund. Primarily as a result of investment returns exceeding expectations, the Fund has grown significantly faster than anticipated when the original States Grant formula was established. This strength has allowed the Government to put forward proposals for temporary adjustments to the level of the States Grant to fund urgent priorities. Each proposal for a variation from the underlying formula is then subject to a law change and a debate in the States Assembly.

The Government spent more than £360 million to support the Island through the Covid-19 pandemic. This funded the public health response, including the Test and Trace Programme as well as economic support measures such as the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme and Fiscal Stimulus Fund. Adjusting the level of the States Grant played a significant role in enabling this expenditure, reducing its impact on wider public services, and allowing for short-term borrowing that was incurred to be repaid.

Further temporary adjustments in 2025 and 2026 enabled investment in healthcare, children's services, and support for Islanders including the following specific investments:

- £27 million p.a. – investment in Health and Care Jersey that included £8 million for Digital Health and £4 million for Preventative Health schemes
- £18 million one-off – for the Loving Homes programme to expand and improve residential care facilities for children
- £20 million one-off – for the Better Business Support package to help businesses manage the transition to the living wage
- £8 million p.a. – for the Children's Services Improvement Programme to strengthen provision for looked after children
- £5 million p.a. – to introduce subsidised early years provision for 2 to 3-year olds and make improvements in education through the teachers' terms and conditions
- £2 million p.a. – additional support for Islanders including expanded eligibility for Pension Plus and the 2026 Back-to-School Bonus

b) Since the pandemic, a total of £397 million has been transferred out of the Social Security (Reserve) Fund to the Social Security Fund.

The Social Security scheme holds ringfenced money in two funds. The Social Security Fund is an operational Fund used to meet weekly benefit payments and administrative costs. This Fund maintains an appropriate cash balance with spare funds placed on short-term deposit to maintain income.

The Social Security (Reserve) Fund acts as an investment fund to hold and manage the large reserves that have built up this century. Funds are invested according to an agreed investment strategy and managed by specialist investment managers. By design, money will be transferred between the two funds as needed.

£000s	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Transfers from SSRF to SSF	55,000	60,000	78,500	89,000	-	-	114,259[1]	396,759

c) Assuming that the additional grant would have reduced transfers from the Social Security (Reserve) Fund or resulted in additional transfers into the Fund, and that the Fund would have achieved the same investment returns, it is estimated that the Reserve Fund balance would be £3.1 billion

[1] Based on current forecast, it reflects £64 million for 2026 and £50 million in respect of the adjustment to the States Grant for 2025

3.9 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Minister for Housing regarding the Affordable Housing Gateway. (WQ.228/2026)

Question

"Will the Minister provide the following information in respect of the Affordable Housing Gateway –

(a) further to the response to Written Question 195/2026, the number of Band 1 applicants currently awaiting social rented accommodation, broken down by property size required and distinguishing between new applicants and existing social housing tenants seeking transfers;
(b) the number of existing social housing tenants awaiting transfers, broken down by reason, including overcrowding, under-occupation, medical need and other recorded reasons;
(c) the number of households allocated social rented accommodation during the last 12 months who have subsequently reapplied to the Gateway or requested a transfer, together with the reasons recorded for doing so;
(d) whether applicants who accept accommodation which does not meet their assessed housing requirements retain their original application date and priority status when subsequently applying for a transfer; and
(e) what policies or procedures, if any, apply when an applicant accepts accommodation which does not meet their assessed housing requirements, including any arrangements for maintaining their position on the waiting list?"

Answer

(a) The number of applicants in Band 1 on the Affordable Housing Gateway currently awaiting social housing, broken down by bedroom requirement and applicant type, is set out below.

Bedrooms required	New applicants	Social housing transfer
Studio	25	2
1 bedroom	21	122
2 bedrooms	14	38
3 bedrooms	9	16
4 bedrooms	2	11
5 bedrooms	1	5
Total	**72**	**194**

For the purposes of this data, “new applicants” refers to applicants currently living in private sector accommodation. The figures are correct as of 27 October 2026.

(b) The number of existing social housing tenants awaiting a transfer across all Bands, broken down by application type recorded by the Affordable Housing Gateway, is set out below. The figures are correct as of 27 October 2026 and include all active transfer applications.

Reason	Number
Moderate medical issues	94
Under-occupation and downsizing	125
Overcrowding	79
Urgent medical issue	36
Transfer relocation *(e.g. on safety or welfare grounds)*	14
Adapted property required	6
Forced to live apart	2
Total	**356**

(c) The Affordable Housing Gateway does not hold data in a form that identifies households allocated social housing during the previous 12 months who have subsequently reapplied to the Gateway or requested a transfer, together with the reasons for doing so. This information is therefore not available.

(d) The Affordable Housing Gateway undertakes a comprehensive assessment of applicants’ housing needs, supported by professional evidence where appropriate. Applicants are then prioritised and allocated available accommodation by social housing providers, having regard to their assessed housing needs, priority on the waiting list and the suitability of the property. Once a person has entered into a tenancy, the accommodation provided would ordinarily reflect their assessed housing needs.

The Affordable Housing Gateway eligibility criteria do not make provision for retaining an original application date or priority where an applicant has been allocated accommodation and entered into a tenancy. Any departure from this approach would require exceptional consideration outside the standard eligibility criteria.

Existing social housing tenants may apply for a transfer where a change in their circumstances gives rise to a demonstrable housing need that cannot be met within their current home. Any such application is assessed in accordance with the published transfer, banding and waiting list criteria.

(e) Access to social housing is underpinned by a comprehensive assessment process undertaken by the Affordable Housing Gateway. The assessment framework is designed to ensure that applicants are allocated accommodation appropriate to their assessed housing needs.

The eligibility criteria do not contain specific provisions relating to applicants accepting accommodation that does not meet those needs, including provision for maintaining a position on the waiting list following allocation of a property.

Properties are allocated on the basis of an applicant's assessed housing needs and the information recorded in their application. Social housing providers should only make offers of accommodation that are suitable for those needs, including any relevant medical or support requirements.

Where concerns arise that an offered or allocated property does not reflect an applicant's assessed housing needs, the Gateway and the relevant social housing provider would review the circumstances and determine whether any action is required to ensure those needs are appropriately addressed.

3.10 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Planning and Regulation regarding hazards in agricultural workers' accommodation. (WQ.229/2026)

Question

"Further to the response to Written Question 214/2026, and his subsequent media statements concerning hazards in agricultural workers' accommodation, will the Minister –

(a) publish the evidence and officer advice supporting his statement that all identified hazards had been dealt with, including when the evidence was made available and the advice provided;
(b) explain how that statement aligns with his written answer that outstanding remedial works could not readily be quantified, his Assembly answer that hazards were generally addressed quickly, and the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs' statement that work to resolve hazards was ongoing;
(c) confirm how many of the 315 hazards had been verified as resolved when he spoke to the media, how this was checked, and whether any remained subject to temporary measures, outstanding repairs or unverified completion;
(d) identify any survey, inspection data or research supporting his comparison with hazards in most Jersey homes, including whether it concerned hazards of comparable severity; and
(e) state whether he will correct or clarify his statements to the Assembly and the media if the evidence does not substantiate them?"

Answer

(a) I have asked officers to compile a report on this programme of work setting out the scope of the inspections undertaken, the nature and extent of the hazards identified, and the progress made to date. This is intended to ensure that the context, evidence and timeline of decision making are presented fully and transparently. I intend to publish the report by the end of the year. Any information published will be presented at an aggregated level and will not identify individual properties, residents or landlords.
(b) The statements referenced relate to different aspects of the programme or to different stages of the work. My officers are inspecting properties in accordance with the Public Health and Safety (Rented Dwellings) (Jersey) Law 2018 but are working closely with partners through the Migrant Safeguarding Partnership to support a coordinated approach to accommodation, welfare and safeguarding matters. The forthcoming report will provide context regarding the distinction between hazards that have been addressed, hazards requiring ongoing monitoring, and the wider remedial works that remain in progress.

(c) The report will set out the methodology used by officers to assess and verify compliance, including the number and type of hazards identified, the measures taken to address them, and the processes used to confirm completion. It has not been necessary to issue any formal notices.
(d) The comparison was not based on any specific survey, inspection data or research study examining hazards across Jersey homes. The comment was a general observation regarding housing conditions.
(e) I am committed to ensuring that information provided to the Assembly and the public is accurate and appropriately contextualised. The forthcoming report will set out the evidence available in relation to the inspection programme, the hazards identified, and the actions taken to address them.

3.11 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the current arrangements for access to consultant neurology care. (WQ.230/2026)

Question

"Will the Minister explain the current arrangements for access to consultant neurology care, including –

(a) the substantive, locum and visiting consultant capacity available and how continuity of service is maintained;
(b) which off-Island providers currently accept neurology referrals from Jersey, including any restrictions on referrals and when the position was last confirmed;
(c) the number of patients awaiting an initial neurology consultant appointment or an off-Island referral, broken down by clinical priority and waiting times, with any overlap between these groups identified; and
(d) the alternative arrangements for clinical review and escalation where local or off-Island neurology services are unavailable?"

Answer

(a) The department retains one locum Consultant Neurologist who is supporting our Botox clinics, as well as an acute medicine physician with an interest in Neurology who is supporting a cohort of MS patients and a middle grade doctor in the department. Our most recent locum Neurologist unfortunately had to leave the island earlier than anticipated, due to personal reasons. They have offered to continue offering a hybrid model, with virtual clinics and on-island presence every few weeks. Governance processes are being reviewed before signing off the agreement. In addition, the department is actively seeking locum cover, but unfortunately has not been successful as yet. Our usual agencies have confirmed that demand for these roles is high across the UK and not just in Jersey, with very limited clinicians available. The department is also approaching targeted recruitment agencies, headhunters, and UK insourcing providers, with further meetings planned this week. HCJ are in discussions with UK providers to set up a formal tertiary link, with associated on-island provision and a

long-term relationship. HCJ are also in an active recruitment process to hire substantive Consultants and have made an offer of employment to one candidate.

(b) If a patient needs to be seen by a specialist, then we are consulting with our current UK partner (Queen's Square) and sending patients off-island where clinically urgent.

(c) No of patients waiting for a first appointment: 1197

Of these:

a. 42 urgent
b. 225 soon
c. 928 routine
d. 2 suspected cancer

Patients waiting by service and day								
Service	0-30	31-60	61-90	91-120	121-180	181-365	>365	**Total**
⊞ Neurology	101	95	72	78	128	387	336	**1197**
Total	101	95	72	78	128	387	336	1197

Note: Accurate as of 30/10/26 @ 16:30 (snapshot)

Patients awaiting a Follow Up: 2617, of which about 300 will be due in the next 3 months.

(d) Patient priority is assessed on an individual basis, and this will guide the next steps in such circumstances. For example, if a patient is identified as urgent, we would consult with our current UK partner (Queen's Square). Pathways with UK tertiary partners for other different clinical pathways are in development.

3.12 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding hospital consultant staffing. (WQ.231/2026)

Question

"Will the Minister provide, as at 26th October 2026, a table of hospital consultant staffing by specialty, broken down by –

(a) the number of consultant posts budgeted for, the number of permanent consultants in post and the number of vacant consultant posts, expressed as full-time equivalents;
(b) the duration of each vacancy and the cover currently provided by locums, visiting consultants or other arrangements, distinguishing vacancies with cover from those without;
(c) which vacancies are reducing clinics, delaying appointments or restricting services, and the effects identified; and
(d) the recruitment status and expected start date for a permanent appointment for each vacancy, where known?"

Answer

Specialty	Budgeted in Post (wte)	Headcount	Vacancy (WTE)	Locum cover	Vacant since	Comments
Medical Director	1.0	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Chief of Service	3.0	3	0	N/A	N/A	
Designated Doctor Child Protection	0.3	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Clinical Lead - Retinal Screening	0.3	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Clinical Skills Teaching	0.1	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Medical Consultant Q&S	0.6	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant Medical Referee Cremations	0.4	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant in Renal Medicine	1.0	1	0	Fixed term cover provided by retired HCJ consultant	Retiree left Mar 24 but returned	Appointment made but candidate declined in Oct 26
Consultant in Oncology	4.6	5	0	Locum cover for 1 post	N/A	Post being advertised for an upcoming vacancy
Consultant in Cardiology	1.8	2	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant Neurology	1.0	0	2.0	1 Fixed term cover	Mar 26. 1 post is a new post	1 person appointed (start date TBC) and new post will re-advertised. Service restricted to virtual clinics.

Consultant in Palliative Medicine	1.0	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant in Gastroenterology	2.0	2	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant in Acute Medicine	4.2	5	1.0	Covered by internal bank	Feb 26	Post being advertised
Consultant in Sexual Health	1.0	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant Histopath. and Cytopath.	4.0	3	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant in Haematology	2.0	2	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant in Microbiology	2.0	2	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant in Rheumatology	1.0	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant in Respiratory Medicine	2.0	2	0	Fixed term appointments for 2 posts	Feb 24	Due to be advertised
Consultant in Diabetes	2.0	1	0	Fixed term appointment for 1 post	N/A	
Consultant Accident and Emergency	8.4	9	1.8	Fixed term appointed for 1 post	July 26	Posts being advertised
Consultant in General Medicine/ Care of the Elderly	2.0	2	3.0	Fixed term appointment for 1 post	May and July 26	Posts being advertised
Consultant In Stroke Medicine	1.0	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant in Mental Health	8.5	9	2.0	Locum cover for 2 posts	May 25	Posts being advertised
Consultant in Old Age Psychiatry	2.0	2	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant Alcohol and Drug Dual Diag.	1.0	1	0	N/A	N/A	

Consultant in Pain Medicine	1.0	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant Urologist	1.0	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant Ophthalmology	1.5	2	2.25	Locum cover for 1 post	New post and Sept 26	Advert closed, post at shortlisting stage
Consultant in Radiology	8.8	9	0	Fixed term cover for 1 post	N/A	No planned date for advertising
Consultant in Anaesthetics	9.5	10	0	Fixed term cover for 2 posts	N/A	No plans to advertise as yet
Consultant in Dermatology incl. GP with special interest	2.3	5	0	Fixed term cover for 0.8wte	N/A	No plans to advertise as yet
Consultant in General Surgery	6.0	6	1.0	N/A	N/A	This is a new post which is being advertised
Consultant in ENT	2.0	2	2.0	Locum cover for both posts	Sept 26 and 1 post is a new post	1 appointment made (starting April) and new post being advertised
Consultant Orthodontist	1.0	1	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant Orthopaedics and Trauma	5.0	5	0	Fixed Term cover for 1 post	N/A	No plans to advertise as yet
Dental Consultant - Oral Surgery	3.0	3	0	Fixed term cover for 1 post	N/A	Due to advertise
Consultant Community Paediatrician	1.0	1	0	N/A	N/A	

Consultant in Paediatrics	5.0	5	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant Obstetrics and Gynaecology	7.0	7	0	N/A	N/A	
Consultant Child and Adolescent MH	1.75	2	2.0	Locum cover provided for 1 post	Apr 26	1 person appointed - provisional start date Jan 2027. 1 post being advertised

NB: Fixed term cover represents that the individual is an employee of HCJ and not Agency workers.

In addition, we have visiting consultants in the following specialties:

- Urology
- Neurology
- Cardiology
- Trauma and Orthopaedics
- Paediatric Urology
- Vascular
- Spinal
- ACHD clinics

In order to address the waiting list, we have also sourced the following specialities with waiting initiative monies:

- Endocrinology
- Endoscopy
- Gastroenterology
- Trauma and Orthopaedics
- Urogynaecology
- General Gynaecology
- General Surgery
- ENT
- Ophthalmology

Furthermore, we are trying to source neurology additional activity.

3.13 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the Government of Jersey Social Impact Report for 2025. (WQ.232/2026)

Question

"Will the Minister –

(a) publish the Government of Jersey Social Value Impact Report for 2025 and, if not, explain why not;
(b) explain the Government's current approach to social value in procurement, including the thresholds and weighting applied in tender evaluation, and how social value commitments are monitored and enforced once contracts are awarded;
(c) list, for each year since social value was introduced into procurement, the key achievements delivered, including the number of contracts with social value commitments and the measures used to assess whether those commitments were met;
(d) provide examples of contracts where social value commitments have delivered demonstrable benefits for Islanders; and
(e) advise what plans, if any, he has to develop and strengthen social value in procurement, including what support is proposed to be given to suppliers, and what specific steps he is taking, or is considering taking, to help charities and social enterprises tender for Government contracts?"

Answer

a) The draft Social Value Impact Report for 2025 will be published following completion of the necessary approval process.

Social value continues to evolve as a policy area. The Government is aware of recent updates to UK guidance, for example 'Cabinet Office PNN 026 The Social Value Model' on 28 October 2026 and will consider any relevant lessons and best practice as part of the continued development of Jersey's social value programme.

The Commercial Services Strategy 2026 –2028 states the following: -

Commercial Services will continue to manage and develop the Social Value Strategy for Government of Jersey, ensuring proportionate consideration is given to initiatives, with an increased focus on benefit to the local economy and jobs.

Social Value, ethical sourcing and sustainability procurement practices will remain a key priority. These principles will be embedded across all commercial activity, with the ambition of minimising environmental impact and maximising the social and particularly the economic benefits for Jersey's communities.

b) For procurements valued at over £100,000, social value forms part of the tender evaluation process and carries a minimum weighting of 10%.

Suppliers are required to demonstrate the social value they already deliver and any additional benefits they would provide if awarded the contract. These proposals are assessed alongside the other tender evaluation criteria.

Where social value commitments form part of a successful bid, they are incorporated into the contract and monitored throughout the contract term. Suppliers are required to report on progress, enabling the Government to review delivery and ensure commitments continue to support wider economic, social and environmental outcomes.

The Government encourages social value activity that aligns with key priorities, including supporting jobs and skills, strengthening local communities, retaining economic benefit within the Island, protecting the environment and promoting the sustainable use of resources.

c) Social value became part of the procurement process in 2020. Since then, the number of contracts containing social value commitments has increased year on year, alongside the breadth and impact of outcomes being delivered through suppliers.

Year	No. of contracts	Key achievements
2020/21	1	Funding provided for DEC course; work experience placements; educational site visits
2022	6	Initiatives supporting healthy and active lifestyles; apprenticeships; introduction of pension and medical benefit schemes.
2023	14	Reduction of waste arising from demolition projects; donations to local charities; employment opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged groups.
2024	18	Development of local skills and talent; educational site visits to heritage buildings; opportunities for school children.
2025	36	Transition to electric plant, equipment and fleet vehicles; waste reduction and sustainability initiatives; donation of resources and labour to local sports clubs.

2026 to date	37	Educational bursary awarded to a local student; apprenticeships; support for third sector organisations

d) Social value commitments are monitored throughout the life of a contract to ensure agreed outcomes are being delivered. Suppliers are required to provide regular updates, enabling the Government to review progress and achievement of commitments.

The figures above relate to contracts containing formal social value commitments approved through the Commercial Approvals Board.

Social value commitments are delivering a range of benefits for Islanders through Government contracts. Examples include:

- Supporting community initiatives and opportunities for young people through the donation and repurposing of assets.
- Investing in local skills and workforce development through bursaries, apprenticeships and professional training opportunities.
- Contributing to environmental improvements through the adoption of lower-emission technologies and more sustainable working practices.

e) Support and guidance for suppliers are kept under review. Measures such as early engagement, understanding capacity limits and overall design of procurement processes and delivery that may encourage broader participation in Government procurement.

The Government continues to develop its approach to social value in procurement, ensuring it remains proportionate, accessible and focused on delivering meaningful benefits for Islanders, while supporting skills development, local business growth and investment in the wider community.

As part of this work, the Government will continue to consider relevant best practice from other jurisdictions, as mentioned above.

3.14 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for External Relations regarding the Sustainable Finance Action Plan. (WQ.233/2026)

Question

"Further to the adoption of the Proposed Budget (Government Plan) 2025-2028 (P.51/2024): ninth amendment. Pillar 2 Allocations, as amended by the Council of Ministers, will the Minister advise –

(a) what drivers to a net-zero economy have been identified through the Sustainable Finance Action Plan since the Budget was adopted, and by whom;
(b) what funding, from Pillar 2 revenue or any other source, has been made available for those drivers in 2025 and 2026, with amounts and the projects funded, and if none, why not;
(c) what action has been taken to support the decarbonisation of the finance industry and with what funding;
(d) how the Council of Ministers has applied the "specific focus" on delivering the Sustainable Finance Action Plan when allocating Pillar 2 competitiveness funding, and how much of that funding has gone to the plan's delivery; and
(e) what provision for these commitments is made in the proposed Budget 2027–2030 and, if none, whether the Minister still considers the 2024 wording to be Government policy?"

Answer

a) The Sustainable Finance Action Plan complements the main economic drivers to a net-zero economy which have already been identified within the Jersey's wider climate policy framework, including the Carbon Neutral Roadmap.

Through implementation of the Action Plan, several financial services policy drivers relevant to Jersey's transition to a net-zero economy have been incentivised and reinforced in a collaborative effort between Government of Jersey, Jersey Finance and the Jersey Financial Services Commission. This includes the addition of new regulatory expectations, the support for new sustainable finance products, corporate social responsibility initiatives and the promotion of sustainable investments. For example:

- The addition of new sustainability risk management and anti-greenwashing obligations to our finance industry firms has promoted an increased awareness of firm's impact into the environment and encouraged the adoption of best practices to support the decarbonisation of the finance industry.

- The support for new sustainable finance products has encouraged local banks to lunch new green products targeting the financing of local sustainability development strategies set by public sector entities as well as local businesses.

- Through enhanced awareness raising, skills and collaboration a range of new corporate social responsibility and philanthropic initiatives have been carried out by our finance industry supporting Jersey's reforestation and the protection of our marine and coastal habitats.

The Carbon Neutral Roadmap recognises that the biggest impact the finance industry can make is in relation to the deployment of sustainable investments internationally. The promotion of Jersey as a sustainable finance centre and further understanding of the compatibility between fiduciary duties and sustainable investments have facilitated an increase in focus on sustainable investments from our finance industry which supports the transition to a net-zero economy by other communities in other parts of the world.

b) The Pillar Two base case, which represents the level of recurring revenue that the Government can reasonably expect to receive on a sustainable basis over the medium term, is used towards:

- Servicing borrowing associated with Phase 1 of the New Healthcare Facilities Programme;
- Investment to enhance the competitiveness of Jersey's financial and professional services sector;
- Funding the ongoing costs of implementing, administering and maintaining the Pillar Two regime; and
- Providing sustainable baseline funding for public services.

Pillar Two income in excess of the base case is subject to significant uncertainty. Hence, such revenue will not be used to fund recurring expenditure or create ongoing spending commitments. It will be used to:

- Help fund the New Healthcare Facilities Programme;
- Reduce the need to draw from the Strategic Reserve;
- Reduce the need for further borrowing.

c) The decarbonisation of the different economic sectors in Jersey (including financial services), including through energy, construction or transport transition policies, is established within the Carbon Neutral Roadmap, which is supported by a wide range of ministerial departments. Within this framework, as well as the Sustainable Finance Action Plan, the role of the Minister for External Relations with responsibility for Financial Services is to support the growth of local - and the attraction of new – sustainable finance investments. This in turn supports the fulfilment of net-zero commitments made by Jersey and its business community, as well as contributing to jobs, growth and the collection of tax revenue to fund public services in Jersey.

d) [see B]

e) The Sustainable Finance Action Plan has resulted in tangible outcomes, including increasing Jersey's regulatory expectations and deepening understanding of sustainable investments.

As outlined in the Common Strategic Policy, our focus must now turn to the growth of the finance industry, implementing Time to Win strategy to secure Jersey's competitive edge in financial and related professional services. The competitiveness funding is intended to:

- improve the competitiveness of Jersey's financial and professional services sector;
- modernise the sector;
- make it easier, faster and more attractive for customers to do business in Jersey; and
- help retain and maximise government revenue supporting public services.

Increasing Jersey's overall business attractiveness (speed, simplicity, cost) should make Jersey even more attractive to the sustainable finance business community, with the obvious additional positive impacts of accelerating the transition to a net-zero economy locally and internationally.

3.15 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the Treasury Advisory Panel's work on aligning the Common Investment Fund with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. (WQ.234/2026)

Question

"Further to the Minister's response to Written Question 210/2025, in which the Minister stated that the Treasury Advisory Panel's work on aligning the Common Investment Fund with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals was "ongoing throughout 2025," will the Minister advise –

(a) whether that work has been completed and, if so, will he state –
  (i) on what date it was completed;
  (ii) what its findings were;
  (iii) whether a report on it will be published, and on what date; and if it will not be published, why not;
(b) if the work is not complete, why this is the case, and when it will be completed;
(c) what the carbon emissions of the Common Investment Fund's portfolio have been for each year since 2023, and whether the Minister will publish this data annually;
(d) on how many occasions since 2023, has the Treasury Advisory Panel escalated concerns with an investment manager over environmental, social or governance (ESG) risks, and whether any mandate has been ended or changed as a result; and
(e) when an updated States Investment Strategies report will be presented to the Assembly to replace Report 184/2024, and whether it will include measurable targets for responsible investment?"

Answer

(a) whether that work has been completed and, if so, will he state –
  (i) on what date it was completed;
  (ii) what its findings were;

The work referred to in Written Question 210/2025 was concluded in October 2025. The exercise sought to understand the extent to which our range of investment managers' investment approaches could be mapped to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and formed part of the Treasury Advisory Panel's (TAP) broader responsible investment programme.

While this workstream has concluded, responsible investment reporting and SDG assessment methodologies continue to evolve, alongside improvements in underlying data availability and reporting standards. TAP therefore regards this as part of an iterative programme of continuous improvement and expects to revisit these issues periodically as industry practice develops and more

robust and comparable data becomes available. This is particularly relevant in relation to SDG measurement, where methodologies and disclosure practices are still developing and there is not yet a universally adopted approach to portfolio-level reporting.

(iii) whether a report on it will be published, and on what date; and if it will not be published, why not;

The work did not comprise a single report, rather, it formed part of a broader programme of responsible investment work undertaken by TAP. This included dedicated papers on the SDGs, carbon statistic capture analysis and climate scenario analysis commissioned and reviewed at successive Responsible Investment days held by TAP.

The SDG workstream identified a number of SDGs that were considered particularly relevant to our investment portfolios and explored the feasibility of assessing and reporting portfolio alignment. The work however identified a number of challenges, highlighting that SDG assessment remains an evolving area. Approaches and data availability vary between managers and asset classes, and there is not yet a universally adopted methodology for measuring portfolio-level SDG alignment.

As a result, whilst the SDGs have been used as a reference framework in manager assessments and responsible investment discussions, the work did not result in the adoption of a formal SDG-alignment framework or portfolio-level SDG reporting methodology for the Common Investment Fund (CIF).

The findings have instead informed the TAP's wider responsible investment approach, including its focus on ESG integration, stewardship, manager engagement, climate-related analysis and ongoing monitoring of responsible investment practices. This forms part of an annual responsible investment dashboard which continues to evolve and shape TAP's efforts to develop a consistent benchmarking tool in this area.

(b) if the work is not complete, why this is the case, and when it will be completed;

This particular workstream was concluded, though will likely be revisited as part of TAP's regular assessment process.

(c) what the carbon emissions of the Common Investment Fund's portfolio have been for each year since 2023, and whether the Minister will publish this data annually;

A full carbon emissions analysis was conducted as at 31 December 2023 to establish a baseline and was repeated by TAP as at 31 December 2025 to assess progress over a meaningful period. No equivalent exercise was undertaken at 31 December 2024.

Collecting, validating and aggregating emissions data across multiple investment managers and asset classes is a considerable undertaking, further complicated by changes in data coverage, estimation techniques and reporting methodologies, which can significantly influence reported emissions.

Accordingly, longer-term comparisons were considered to provide a more meaningful indication of trends in the portfolio's carbon footprint.

The reported Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions for the CIF's non-sovereign portfolio were:

- 31 December 2023: **280,815 tCO_2e**
- 31 December 2025: **251,117 tCO_2e**

Sovereign bond holdings* are reported separately because they are calculated using a different methodology. Reported sovereign bond emissions were:

- 31 December 2023: **59,771 tCO_2e**
- 31 December 2025: **57,374 tCO_2e**

* Sovereign bonds are reported separately because they use a different and less standardised methodology to allocate a country's emissions to holders of its debt, making them difficult to directly compare with corporate emissions.

Currently the majority of the Fund's reported carbon footprint arises from the listed equity portfolio. This reflects both the nature of equity ownership and the fact that emissions data for listed companies is generally more readily available and robust than for other asset classes. Data coverage is not uniform across the portfolio. Coverage is high for listed equities and corporate bonds where underlying companies regularly report emissions data, and lower for certain alternative asset classes such as private market and hedge funds.

Although the direction of travel has been positive, TAP caution that carbon reporting methodologies continue to evolve. Improvements in data quality, estimation techniques and manager reporting can result in changes to reported emissions even where the underlying investments have not materially changed.

Accordingly headline carbon figures can be misleading, for example, a material proportion of emissions stem from investments held in steel producers where operations are inherently carbon intensive. The managers holding these investments have been challenged on these positions but regard the selected exposures as industry leaders on decarbonisation and have demonstrated to TAP clear evidence of engagement with the company on its decarbonisation plans. Divestment of the position might reduce the portfolios carbon footprint but not necessarily deliver better progress towards reducing carbon as holdings would be sold to shareholders less willing to advocate investment required to deliver a better environmental outcome.

TAP would caution that publishing a single carbon emissions figure in isolation could be misleading. Current emissions data coverage across the portfolio is approximately 71%, with strong coverage in listed equities but lower coverage in asset classes such as private credit and hedge funds. As a result, changes in reported emissions may reflect changes in asset allocation, data coverage and reporting methodologies, rather than underlying emissions.

While data quality and disclosure standards continue to improve, TAP remains cautious that publishing headline emissions figures alone may not provide a meaningful assessment of portfolio

sustainability outcomes or the effectiveness of the Common Investment Fund's responsible investment and stewardship activities. The disclosure of emissions data, alongside commentary on wider portfolio activity and stewardship actions, will be considered as part of the annual accounts process, and TAP will continue to monitor developments in reporting standards and market practice.

(d) On how many occasions since 2023, has the Treasury Advisory Panel escalated concerns with an investment manager over environmental, social or governance (ESG) risks, and whether any mandate has been ended or changed as a result; and

TAP has embedded responsible investment considerations within its ongoing manager oversight programme. As a result, managers are routinely challenged on investment performance, stewardship activities and the implementation of responsible investment policies as part of the normal oversight process. This includes dedicated asset-class review days, conducted annually, at which managers are required to present and support their approach to investment management, stewardship and responsible investment.

Earlier this year, as part of its oversight programme, TAP identified a number of managers with holdings in companies that external ESG data providers had categorised as ESG "laggards". TAP undertook a targeted engagement exercise with those managers to better understand the rationale for holding these positions, the ESG risks involved, and the stewardship activities being undertaken to address those risks. Five equity managers were included in the review.

Managers were required to explain whether the holdings remained in the portfolio, the investment rationale for holding companies with lower ESG ratings, the ESG risks associated with those holdings, and the engagement and stewardship activities being undertaken.

The review concluded that managers generally provided robust and well-supported explanations for their holdings and were able to demonstrate active stewardship and engagement with the companies concerned to TAP's satisfaction. TAP identified a small number of areas where further engagement based on the explanations received would be beneficial, and these will be followed up at the next asset specific review day.

TAP considers this targeted engagement programme to be an example of active oversight of ESG risks within the portfolio. However, no investment mandate has been terminated or materially amended solely as a result of ESG concerns since 2023, though mandates have been terminated where the overall investment approach, in which the responsible investment approach is embedded, fell behind peers.

(e) when an updated States Investment Strategies report will be presented to the Assembly to replace Report 184/2024, and whether it will include measurable targets for responsible investment?

The States Investment Strategies report is kept under regular review, and an update is expected in Q4 2026/Q1 2027. Any future revision will consider developments in responsible investment and the implementation of the CIF's Responsible Investment Policy.

The Panel continues to review evolving industry standards and best practice, including the availability of consistent and comparable data, when considering whether quantitative responsible investment targets would be appropriate in future.

However, at this time, no decision has been taken to introduce specific measurable responsible investment targets.

3.16 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding violence against women and girls funding. (WQ.235/2026)

Question

"Further to Written Question 208/2026, regarding violence against women and girls funding, and the Minister's response during Questions Without Notice on 20th October 2026, will the Minister advise –

(a) which charitable organisations specialising in supporting victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence were consulted during the preparation of the 2027 Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) funding proposals, and what input they provided;
(b) whether consideration was given to commissioning additional services from existing specialist charities, including Jersey Action Against Rape (JAAR) and Freedom from Domestic Abuse (FREEDA), as an alternative to creating additional Government posts, and, if so, what conclusions were reached, and if not, why not;
(c) what assessment informed the decision to allocate £57,000 for an additional specialist therapeutic post within Health and Care Jersey, including whether existing charitable provision was considered; and
(d) what criteria is used to determine whether VAWG services are commissioned from specialist charities or delivered directly by Government?"

Answer

(a) Following the results of the election on 7th June 2026, and the subsequent lifting of the pre-election period restrictions, officers took the first opportunity to consult with charities and community services involved in work to address VAWG by hosting a workshop on 8th June 2026 which aimed to understand the demands on, and needs of, their services.

Invitations to this workshop were extended to members of the VAWG Taskforce that represent third sector services (including JAAR and FREEDA). However, invitations were also extended to a wider group of charities and community services who have not previously been involved in the work of the VAWG Taskforce, so as to ensure that all perspectives were captured. These invites were sent out via a range of mailing lists[1] to ensure a wide reach across third sector and community organisations. Third sector members of the VAWG

Taskforce were also encouraged to invite any additional charitable services that they felt the workshop would be relevant for.

During this workshop, attendees were asked a series of questions related to the operational pressures and capacity and resourcing challenges that their services are facing. Officers used the feedback garnered during this workshop to inform the content of the VAWG funding business case for consideration by the new Council of Ministers in July 2026.

Officers also contacted FREEDA directly to request a quotation for the delivery of a training package relating to routine and targeted enquiry processes relating to VAWG within Health and Care Jersey (HCJ). This work forms part of the wider workstream to deliver the remaining VAWG Taskforce recommendations, and relates specifically to the delivery of Recommendations 41, 42, 43, 44 and 45. The figures provided by FREEDA in their quotation for this work were used to inform the content of the business case, specifically the component amounts allocated to "HCJ Training and Delivery".

(b) As explained in the answer to WQ 208/2026, a significant proportion of the budget allocated to VAWG in 2027 is designed to fund the operationalisation of the incoming package of VAWG legislation. As statutory services are the primary stakeholders involve in the operationalisation of this new legislation, it follows that these services are the primary recipients of the funds allocated to the operationalisation of these new laws. For instance, a significant proportion of the funding is allocated to the States of Jersey Police to provide the additional investigative capacity and forensic capability required for the effective implementation of the new legislation. These are not services that can be appropriately outsourced to specialist charities.

However, consideration was given to the commissioning of additional services from existing specialist charities as an alternative to the creation of additional Government posts, where this was appropriate. For instance, consideration was given to commissioning FREEDA to deliver a training package to support the implementation of routine and targeted enquiry processes relating to VAWG within HCJ. FREEDA was identified as the most appropriate service to approach for a quotation for the delivery of training as they already lead on the delivery of Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) programme, an evidence-based domestic abuse training, support and referral programme specially designed or GPs. They are therefore well placed to ensure that this new bespoke training package for HCJ is consistent and coordinated with Primary Care and have extensive experience delivering training to medical professionals where limited time availability for training can be a significant challenge. As a result, FREEDA was asked to provide a quotation for this work which was then used to inform the content of the business case that was submitted for the VAWG funding.

It is also important to note that a proportion of the funding allocated to Justice and Home Affairs relating to "Training and delivery costs" and "Marginalised community engagement" will provide the budget from which the government can then commission training and other services from existing specialist charities, such as to implement the remaining VAWG Taskforce recommendations that relate to training and further research.

A full breakdown of which additional VAWG services and/or posts were considered for delivery by the third sector and the rationale behind this decision is provided in Appendix 1.

(c) The VAWG Taskforce report identified that the current provision of specialist counselling and therapeutic provision for victim-survivors is too limited.[1] This resulted in VAWG Taskforce Recommendation 60, which directed that a gap analysis of current specialist counselling provision be undertaken and subsequent investment to improve the appropriateness and availability of specialist counselling should follow.

This gap analysis was subsumed into a wider review into the structure and staffing of the Jersey Domestic Abuse Service (JDAS), as directed by Taskforce Recommendation 19.1. In particular, the review identified that long waiting lists for specialist therapeutic support in Jersey were found to be placing JDAS under significant pressures. In particular, the review identified that JDAS was having to provide long-term emotional support to victim-survivors, despite this form of support falling outside the scope of their service provision, because these individuals had been unable to access the therapeutic support they required via statutory mental health services.

This finding resulted in the decision to allocate £57,000 for an additional therapeutic post within Health and Care Jersey, primarily because it was the long waiting lists for the specialist counselling provision through statutory mental health services that was identified as placing unnecessary pressure on JDAS, a separate statutory service.

It is also important to acknowledge that we, as a government, have a duty to provide specialist therapeutic support for victim-survivors through our statutory mental health services.

JAAR provides one-to-one counselling for victim-survivors of sexual trauma and rape. This is an invaluable service provision which I understand has formed a key component of the recovery and healing of many victim-survivors in Jersey. However, the service does not provide specialist counselling provision to victim-survivors of domestic abuse.

Existing charitable service provision was therefore not considered to be an appropriate alternative to the HCJ post. The specialist support that will be provided by the HCJ post differs from the JAAR provision because it will provide long-term specialist counselling provision for victim-survivors of both domestic abuse and sexual violence via our statutory mental health service.

(d) The criteria used to determine whether VAWG services are commissioned from specialist charities or delivered directly by government depends on the function of the specific service in question. A breakdown of which VAWG services were considered for delivery by the third sector and the rationale behind this decision is provided in Appendix 1.

VAWG services relating to the implementation of statutory functions, such as the implementation of new legislation, necessarily need to be delivered by statutory services including the police, the courts, law officers, and staff working within the Dewberry House Sexual Assault Referral Centre and the Jersey Domestic Abuse Service.

VAWG services related to the provision of specialist support for victim-survivors must be appropriately balanced between statutory and charitable organisations. It is important to note that each specialist support service and charity in Jersey provides a different function and so their suitability for the delivery of specific VAWG services will depend on the type of services required. As noted above, the long waiting lists for specialist therapeutic support provided via our statutory mental health services were identified as putting a strain on the

Jersey Domestic Abuse Service (JDAS). It follows then, that the most appropriate way to alleviate the pressure on JDAS would be to provide additional resource to our statutory mental health services so that these waiting lists can be reduced and victim-survivors can more readily access long-term specialist support.

The commissioning of services relating to education and training is more appropriately open to the charitable sector. There are a number of VAWG Taskforce recommendations, and recommendations arising from related workstreams, which call for additional training and guidance on different aspects of VAWG. A proportion of the VAWG funding for Justice and Home Affairs is allocated to "Training and delivery costs" in order to provide the government with the necessary budget to commission services and training from specialist charities and other organisations, depending on where the delivery of this work most appropriately sits.

The VAWG funding allocated to training and delivery in this budget represents the first step to securing the funds we need to commission VAWG services, including from specialist charities and organisations. Provided this budget is approved by States Members, the budget will then be used to commission services from specialist organisations including those which operate within the charitable sector.

Appendix 1

Additional service/post	**Considered for commissioning of additional services from existing specialist charities**	**Rationale**
HCJ Training and Delivery	Yes	The delivery of training to support the implementation of routine and targeted enquiry processes related to VAWG in HCJ can be appropriately outsourced to a specialist charity.
Follow-up independent review of criminal justice system	N/A	The follow-up review must be conducted by an independent legal professional with extensive experience relating to the management of domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault cases in the criminal justice system. It would not be appropriate to commission this work from a Jersey-based charity as full independence is required.
1 x FTE Data Analyst	N/A	This post relates to the monitoring of data collected by statutory services to support the demand-led funding model agreed by the Government to fund demand resulting from the new VAWG legislation and to develop a centralised VAWG dataset in line with the VAWG Taskforce recommendations. It is a central government role that would be less effectively performed by an external agency.
1 x FTE Training and Delivery Support Officer	N/A	This post relates to the coordination and delivery of training related to the operationalisation of the VAWG legislation, the remaining VAWG Taskforce recommendations, and training recommendations arising from other independent reviews. The individual in this role will work closely with different charities and community services to

		commission training delivery, but the role must sit within government in order to provide an independent and central coordinating function.
HCJ 1 x FTE Specialist Therapist	N/A	This post relates to the creation of an additional Specialist Therapist post to provide specialist therapeutic support to victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence within Health and Care Jersey. Long waiting lists for specialist counselling provision through statutory mental health services was identified as placing unnecessary pressure on JDAS. The most appropriate way to alleviate the pressure on JDAS was identified as providing additional resource to our statutory mental health services so that these waiting lists can be reduced.
Training and delivery costs	Yes	This funding relates to the delivery of a variety of training packages in addition to the development of new practice and guidance. A proportion of this funding will be used by government to commission services and training from specialist charities where the delivery of this work most appropriately sits with them.
Marginalised community engagement	Yes	This funding relates to further research and engagement with marginalised groups to understand their unique vulnerabilities in relation to VAWG and how support provision may be improved. A proportion of the funding for this work will be considered for the commissioning of services or training from specialist charities where this is felt appropriate.
Implementation of recommendations from independent review of family court system	Yes	The recommendations arising from the independent review of the family court system are anticipated to relate to improvements to practice, knowledge and procedure within the system. Funding for the implementation of these recommendations will necessarily be allocated to the services subject to those recommendations. Where some of the recommendations create a demand for the commissioning of specialist training that can be appropriately delivered by an existing specialist charity in Jersey, this option will be considered.
All SoJP roles and services	N/A	All additional States of Jersey Police roles relate to increasing investigative and forensic capacity within the police force. The performance of these new roles cannot be appropriately outsourced to specialist charities.
All LOD roles	N/A	All additional LOD roles relate to increasing the capacity of the Criminal Division of the LOD to accommodate a significant increase in workload. The performance of these new roles cannot be appropriately outsourced to specialist charities.
All Judicial Greffe and Viscount's Department roles	N/A	All additional roles in the Judicial Greffe and Viscount's Department relate to increasing the capacity of the Court Service to manage the anticipated increase in court cases. The performance

		of these new roles cannot be appropriately outsourced to specialist charities.
Official Analyst's Laboratory 2 x FTE Analyst	N/A	Additional roles in the Official Analyst's Laboratory relate to realigning the Laboratory's forensic services capacity and capability to manage the anticipated increase in demand. The performance of these forensic services cannot be appropriately outsourced to specialist charities.

3.17 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Social Security regarding the structural deficit in the Health Insurance Fund. (WQ.236/2026)

Question

"Will the Minister advise what actions, if any, are being taken to address the structural deficit in the Health Insurance Fund and will she state whether she is giving consideration to increasing the rate of Social Security contributions to address this deficit and, if so, when could such a change be implemented?"

Answer

Pressure on the Health Insurance Fund has been recognised by the Council of Ministers and highlighted in the Proposed Budget 2027-2030 (page 86), where it states

The ageing demographic, increasing levels of disease in our community, and improvements in available treatments, are increasing the cost of health and care services in Jersey – this includes the costs met by the Fund. These pressures will continue to increase in the coming years. Changes will be needed to pay for future health and care costs in a sustainable way. The Minister for Health and Social Services is working to forecast future healthcare costs across the whole health and care system. That forecast will inform decisions about how best to fund and provide healthcare in future. Those decisions may include reform of the Health Insurance Fund and transfer of the Fund from the Social Security Minister to the Health Minister. The Fund provides ring fenced funding for primary care services which are essential to the health of Islanders, but ring fencing introduces barriers which can act against the best interests of patients and can create disincentives to the effective use of public money. In the meantime, the current role of the Health Insurance Fund in subsidising the cost of specific primary care services will be maintained.

There are no plans to increase Social Security contributions given that work is underway to forecast costs, consider health care models and funding options.

3.18 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding an income-based rental policy for Andium Homes. (WQ.237/2026)

Question

"In his capacity as shareholder representative for Andium Homes, will the Minister advise whether –

(a) any consideration has been given to utilising surplus funds, or increasing taxes, to service Andium Homes's existing debt so that an income-based rental policy could be instigated and if not, why not; and
(b) he has engaged with the Minister for Housing to discuss the feasibility of either a reduction, deferral, or cessation of Andium's approximately £30 million annual return to Government?"

Answer

(a) No consideration has been given. The review of the social rents policy States Assembly | R.5/2026 in response to the Assembly's adoption of P.29/2025, concluded that the current social rents model broadly balances affordability with the financial sustainability of social housing providers. It also concluded that moving to an income-based model would introduce significant bureaucracy, administrative complexity and financial uncertainty for what may be limited additional benefit once Income Support is taken into account.

Ultimately, the review highlights the need for social housing providers to have sufficient income to maintain homes, invest in existing stock and support the delivery of new homes.

I do not therefore believe it would be a prudent use of taxpayers' funds, or to raise taxes, simply to service Andium's existing debt when Andium is comfortably servicing that debt already and the review did not conclude that moving to an income-based rental policy is an improvement to the existing model.

(b) There has been no engagement between myself and the Minister of Housing with regard to Andium's Annual Return to Government.

3.19 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Social Security regarding abolishing the Social Security Cap. (WQ.238/2026)

Question

"Will the Minister advise whether any consideration has been, or is being, given to abolishing the Social Security Cap, given that the Social Security Fund has a structural deficit; and, if not, why not?"

Answer

The Social Security Fund (and Reserve Fund) are entering a new stage, which has been forecast for some considerable time, in which expenditure will exceed income from contributions and the States Grant because of demographic changes. However, the overall financial position of the Funds also reflects investment income. The Budget forecast shows the value of the Funds continuing to grow from £2.7 billion to £3.2 billion by the end of 2030.

Ministers are not currently considering removing the upper earnings limits for Social Security contributions.

The Minister for Social Security is developing a long-term strategy for the Social Security Funds alongside the four-yearly actuarial review. Both are expected to be completed and published in spring 2027. Together, they will provide an updated assessment of the long-term financial position of the Funds and inform the development of the 2028 Budget, including consideration of any changes to existing policy.

The long-term strategy will consider:

- the ongoing purpose and objectives of the Fund, following the building of substantial Fund reserves since the late 1990s
- the current financial position and long-term outlook of the Social Security Funds
- the future level and balance of Fund income, including contributions, States grants and investment returns
- the appropriate level and use of Fund reserves over time
- fairness between generations

Together, these reviews will provide the appropriate basis for considering any significant changes to Social Security policy, including the current contribution and wider funding structure, and the States grant.

3.20 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central of the Chief Minister regarding the publication of Freedom of Information requests and responses. (WQ.239/2026)

Question

"Will the Chief Minister advise why fewer Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and responses have been published to date in 2026 than in previous years, and will he explain why the wording on the Government's website has been changed from, "We publish anonymised requests and responses on our website. Once information is issued to you in response to your FOI request, it is then considered to be publicly available." to, "After we respond, we may publish your request and

response.”; and will he further advise whether this change reflects a change in policy regarding the publication of FOI requests and responses?”

Answer

There is no change in policy, and the website wording was changed and brought into line with existing practice. There is no legal requirement under the Freedom of Information (Jersey) Law 2011 to publish FOI responses. However, the Government of Jersey chooses to publish most FOI responses proactively, as part of its commitment to openness and transparency.

3.21 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding referrals, reports or recorded offences relating to human trafficking, modern slavery of child exploitation. (WQ.240/2026)

Question

“Will the Minister advise –

(a) for each year since 2021, the number of referrals, reports or recorded offences relating to human trafficking, modern slavery or child exploitation involving persons recorded as travelling to or from Jersey within the Common Travel Area, broken down by jurisdiction, exploitation type and whether the individual was under 18, with figures given in bands where necessary to protect the identity of individuals;

(b) whether any risk assessment, policy or procedure exists concerning trafficking or child exploitation linked to private vessels arriving from within the Common Travel Area and, if not, whether one will be undertaken;

(c) what procedures exist for verifying the identity of, and relationship between, children and accompanying adults travelling within the Common Travel Area, including on inter-Island air and sea services; and

(d) whether Jersey has any memoranda of understanding or information-sharing agreements relating to trafficking or child exploitation with law enforcement or border agencies in other Common Travel Area jurisdictions, including the other Crown Dependencies, and, if not, whether such agreements are being considered as part of the development of modern slavery legislation?”

Answer

(a) Whilst a number of safeguarding-related incidents have been recorded by the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service (JCIS) since 1 January 2021 from interactions with

passengers at the borders, none of these relate directly to offences involving human trafficking, modern slavery, or child exploitation.

Where an indicator of, or a concern relating to, human trafficking, modern slavery, or child exploitation, is identified, the relevant information is shared with other agencies as appropriate, and as per policy.

JCIS have dealt with cases after entry where concerns around mistreatment have been identified by Officers. In all instances, JCIS will always take necessary steps to deal with the individual circumstance. Different processes which are followed range from the submission of intelligence which can then be disseminated to relevant partner agencies or stakeholders, through to investigation and prosecution under Immigration legislation.

States of Jersey Police (SoJP) view modern slavery, human trafficking and child exploitation as serious and organised criminality, relevant information and intelligence is prioritised to mitigate threat, harm and risk.

Since 2021 SoJP have received and developed information relating to at least 3 reports of modern slavery and human trafficking in Jersey. Whilst none resulted in a crime being recorded, the safeguarding of involved parties and potential victims was prioritised on all occasions.

All three reports related to individuals over the age of 18, and related to concerns around potential trafficking from England. All individuals were referred through safeguarding pathways.

Since 2021 SoJP have investigated at least three child exploitation cases relevant to this question. They involved either offenders or victims travelling between Jersey and England.

(b) There is no specific risk assessment, policy or procedure relating solely to trafficking or child exploitation linked to private vessels arriving in Jersey from within the Common Travel Area (CTA).

The CTA arrangements provide for the free movement of people between the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the Crown Dependencies. Consequently, there is no legal requirement for routine immigration control of persons arriving in Jersey from elsewhere within the CTA.

As an island jurisdiction with an extensive coastline and numerous potential landing points, it is neither practical nor possible to monitor and control every private vessel entering Jersey waters. Accordingly, JCIS will undertake checks and questioning in respect of customs matters on a risk based basis, using available intelligence, operational information and safeguarding indicators to identify any movements of vessels which are deemed to be high

risk. Identity checks will form part of this questioning, and action will be taken should there be any concerns in respect of trafficking or child exploitation.

All vessels arriving at Jersey harbours are required to notify Ports of Jersey in advance of their arrival.

While there is no separate policy directed specifically at private vessels arriving from within the CTA, safeguarding vulnerable persons and identifying potential victims of trafficking or child exploitation remains an integral part of JCIS's wider border security and law enforcement functions. JCIS keeps its operational procedures under regular review and will continue to assess emerging risks and adapt its approach where necessary.

(c) As there is no legal requirement for routine immigration controls on travel between Jersey, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Guernsey and the Isle of Man, there are no statutory identity checks undertaken by JCIS.

Carriers are responsible for verifying the identity of passengers for the purposes of travel in accordance with their own operating procedures and conditions of carriage. Passengers travelling by air or sea are generally required to produce photographic identification, although the form of identification accepted may vary between operators.

JCIS will however uphold the protection of our borders and those travelling to and from the island, and will always seek to ensure that arriving passengers are doing so legitimately. Establishing identity on arrival is a priority, and JCIS have specific policies in respect of the safeguarding of children, which includes the verification of identification and relationship between adults and minors. The island's agencies work together to ensure that children are protected through fora such as the Safeguarding Partnership Board and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, and in addition, JCIS works closely with both the States of Jersey Police and Ports of Jersey to identify and respond to safeguarding risks at the borders. Officers are trained to recognise indicators of vulnerability and exploitation and will take appropriate action where concerns are identified.

(d) Jersey has established information-sharing arrangements and data-sharing agreements with relevant law enforcement, border security and safeguarding partners as a matter of routine operational practice. These arrangements support the exchange of intelligence and information relating to a wide range of threats which include human trafficking, modern slavery, child exploitation and other forms of serious and organised crime.

Effective intelligence sharing is a critical component of Jersey's risk based approach to border security. Information received from partner agencies, both within Jersey and across Common Travel Area jurisdictions, including the other Crown Dependencies, is reviewed and assessed alongside other intelligence and operational information to identify potential risks and inform appropriate action.

SoJP already share and receive information and intelligence through a range of established systems and channels, supported by liaison with law enforcement and safeguarding partners. These arrangements support the investigation of human trafficking, modern slavery and child exploitation across jurisdictions, and help identify and safeguard children and vulnerable adults. Information is exchanged securely and in accordance with applicable legislative and data protection requirements.

3.22 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Children and Families regarding children on the Jersey Exploitation Pathway. (WQ.241/2026)

Question

"Will the Minister advise, for each year since 2021, the number of children on the Jersey Child Exploitation Pathway who had records showing travel to or from another Common Travel Area jurisdiction, broken down by jurisdiction, with figures provided in bands where necessary to protect the identity of individuals?"

Answer

The Jersey Child Exploitation Pathway was introduced in May 2025 as part of the Children's Services Improvement Programme. As a result, no Child Exploitation Pathway records exist prior to this date. The exploitation pathway is under continued development as we move towards the implementation of the Risk Outside the Home Framework (ROTH) and does not hold children's travel as a reportable data field.

3.23 Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning regarding expenditure on student finance support for higher education. (WQ. 242/2026)

Question

"In relation to expenditure on student finance support for higher education, will the Minister advise –

(a) the budget allocated and actual expenditure on student finance, shown separately from other funding for education and lifelong learning, in the years 2018, 2024 and 2025 and state the –
    (i) forecast expenditure for 2026; and
    (ii) the funding allocated within the Proposed Budget 2027-2030 (P.73.2026) for years 2027 to 2030;

(b) the assumptions underlying the funding allocations for the years 2028 to 2030, including expected student numbers, annual uprating of grants, allowances and income thresholds, and how academic-year costs are apportioned across calendar-year budgets;
(c) expenditure on tuition fee grants, maintenance grants and other allowances, including for clinical students, disabled students and interview allowances for each year from 2024 to 2026; and
(d) the amounts and rationale for any underspend in the years 2018 to 2026 and whether any such underspend was carried forward, reallocated within the department, or returned to the Consolidated Fund?"

Answer

(a)

Year*	Budget Allocated (£)	Actual Expenditure (£)
2018	10,558,000	9,955,000
2024	16,032,000	13,779,000
2025	16,396,000	12,663,000

(a i)

Year*	Forecast Expenditure (£)
2026	13,000,000

(a ii)

Year*	Funding Allocated (£)
2027	16,130,000
2028	16,559,000
2029	16,699,000
2030	16,699,000

*Budget and expenditure are presented by fiscal calendar year.

(b)

2028 to 2030 assumptions

Expected student numbers

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Estimated Student Numbers	1,258	1,295	1,247	1,321

*Years are expressed in academic years

Student number forecasts are derived using historical participation rates for Year 11 and A Level students progressing from further education into higher education (HE).

These rates are applied to projected cohorts of forthcoming school leavers to estimate future HE entrants.

A similar methodology is used to forecast mature student enrolments and students returning following a gap year.

Current Year 1 enrolment data is then used to model continuation and retention trends, enabling projections of student numbers from the point of entry through to course completion across subsequent years of study.

Annual uprating of grants, allowances and income thresholds

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Grant: Tuition Fees	£10,050	£10,312	£10,589	£10,865
Grant: Maintenance	2.3%	2%	2%	2%
Allowances:	2.3%	2%	2%	2%
Income Thresholds	4.6%	3.4%	3.2%	3.2%

*Years are expressed in academic years

Tuition Fees are taken from data published by the UK Government on expected changes to university fee caps in 2026 and the percent increase of 2.68% in 2027. This percentage has also been assumed in future years' rises.

Maintenance Grants are inflated by UK CPI, as this index closely reflects the living costs incurred by the majority of students in receipt of Student Finance grants. The percentages are taken from the published OBR report as these give a best estimate for future periods.

Allowances are also increased in the same manner as Maintenance Grants.

However, actual changes to grants are based on nominal changes in CPI as published in the September Indices.

Income Thresholds are forecast to increase in line with forecasted average earning percentages published by the Fiscal Policy Panel Spring Forecast as these give a best estimate for future periods.

However, actual changes to threshold are now based on nominal changes in income as published in the Index of Average Earnings Report by Statistics Jersey each August.

How academic-year costs are apportioned across calendar year budgets

Forecast costs are apportioned in equal thirds across the three academic terms. i.e. for the 2026-7 academic year, the Autumn Term is incurred in 2026 whilst the Spring and Summer Term captured in 2027.

(c)

Expenditure on tuition fee grants, maintenance grants and other allowances

(£)	2024	2025	2026 (forecast)
Tuition Fees	8,751,000	8,236,000	8,592,000
Maintenance Grants*	4,733,000	4,157,000	4,317,000
Other allowances*	295,000	270,000	91,000
Total	13,779,000	12,663,000	13,000,000

*Other allowances disabled students and interview allowances. Maintenance Grants include values for clinical students.

***Expenditure is presented by fiscal calendar year.

(d)

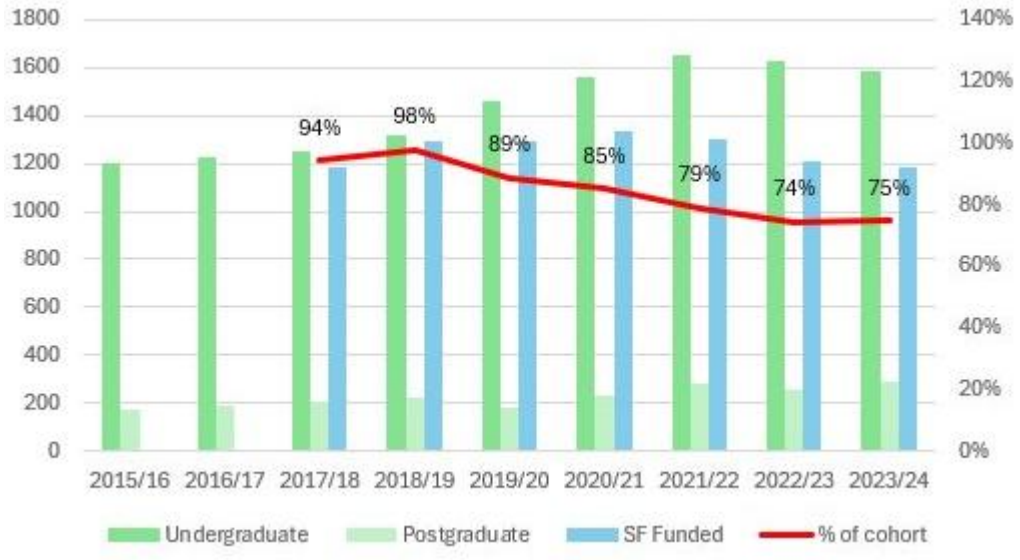
Amounts underspent

Year	Underspend (£)
2018	604,000
2019	27,000
2020	988,000
2021	1,364,000
2022	1,655,000
2023	986,000
2024	2,253,000
2025	3,733,000
2026	2,770,000

Rationale for underspend

Significant changes to the student finance scheme were made in 2018, which predicted levels of students in receipt of student finance support to reach 1,600 per year. However, in the years following student levels have fluctuated in the region of 1,150-1,350.

Whilst absolute numbers of students pursuing university degrees in the UK has remained stable, the percentage of the cohort in receipt of student finance support is declining.



* Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data

** The above graph reflects UK reported data only. Similar statistical reports are not collected for the rest of the world however, based on current trends in student finance applications for study elsewhere, the number of individuals studying outside of Jersey and the UK are considered to represent a very small proportion of the overall cohort.

In the 2025 Academic year, all thresholds were uplifted by 5.2% to reflect average income increases for that year. This increased the full award threshold for fees up to income under £115,720 rather than £100,000 and the upper threshold from £200,000 to £210,400.

Use of underspend

No underspend in any given year was carried forward. Carrying forward underspends require exceptional permission in accordance with the Public Finance (Jersey) Law 2019 which was neither sought nor granted.

The budget forms part of the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department's Head of Expenditure limit. After seeking and being granted permission from the Treasury Minister, unused budget allocated for student finance would firstly be used to offset overspending areas within the department before being returned to the Consolidated Fund.

3.24 Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning regarding applications received for higher education student finance. (WQ.243/2026)

Question

"Will the Minister advise, broken down for each academic year from 2023 to 2027 –

(a) the number of applications received for higher education student finance, and confirm the number of students in receipt of –
  (i) a full maintenance award;
  (ii) a partial maintenance award; and
  (iii) a fees-only award;
(b) the number of nil-award applicants and refusals, including the principal grounds for refusal;
(c) the number of students in receipt of funding for a postgraduate professional qualification under Article 9 of the Education (Grants and Allowances) (Jersey) Order 2018 and total expenditure; and
(d) the annual budget of the Jersey Bursary, the number of bursary applications received and the number granted, including their total value?"

Answer

(a) and (b)

Academic year	Full Maintenance	Partial Maintenance	Fees Only	No funding	Rejected
2023/24	251	425	453	124	111
2024/25	186	388	508	146	139
2025/26	192	377	501	92	85
2026/27	Applications for 2026/27 have not closed yet so figures are not complete				

Reasons for rejected applications are not collated into a report and to specify them all would require manual assessment of all records. The main reasons for rejection are failing to meet one or more eligibility criteria such as: -

- applicant does not meet residency requirement
- course applied for does not meet eligibility criteria
- applicant already holds a degree

(c)

	Professional Qualifications	
Academic Year	Total Number of students funded	Funding
2023/24	80	£673,094
2024/25	69	£615,924
2025/26	72	£690,324
2026/27	Applications for 2026/27 have not closed yet so figures are not complete	

(d)

Academic year	Jersey Bursary Applications	Jersey Bursary Interviewed	Jersey Bursary Funded	Jersey Bursary Funding amount	Ongoing funding
2023/24	33	14	14	£100,500	£11,000
2024/25	44	18	16	£83,000	£41,000
2025/26	40	20	20	£96,000	£22,000
2026/27	49	19	19	£101,000	£16,000
Jersey Bursary budget is circa £120,000					

3.25 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the proposed increases in Long-Term Care (LTC) contribution rates from 2028. (WQ.244/2026)

Question

"In relation to the proposed increases in Long-Term Care (LTC) contribution rates from 2028 to 2030, will the Minister –

(a) advise whether the Income Tax Instalment Scheme (ITIS) collection system can accommodate the proposed LTC contribution rates of 1.8%, 2.2% and 2.5% without modification;
(b) explain how the requirement to round ITIS deductions up to the nearest whole percentage point would affect deductions from employees' earnings; and
(c) state whether any changes to legislation, payroll systems or collection arrangements are anticipated, together with the estimated costs of implementing any such changes?"

Answer

The Income Tax Instalment Scheme (ITIS) is designed to collect, as far as possible, the estimated annual tax bill of employees with simpler affairs (such as one source of employment income).

Under current tax legislation, ITIS is capable of accommodating the proposed increase in the Long-Term Care (LTC) contribution rate. The Income Tax (Jersey) Law 1961 requires all ITIS "effective rates" (which govern monthly deductions from employees' salaries) to be rounded up to the next whole number.

This generally means that most employees will have a credit at the end of the year (subject to their annual tax return and assessment) which rolls forward into the next year's ITIS rates, so reducing the risk of accruing arrears.

Employees' personal ITIS effective rates combine expected income tax and LTC contributions for a year and will vary according to income; any outstanding assessed tax and LTC liabilities; and any available credits. ITIS rates seek to accumulate sufficient funds to meet the annual tax assessment within the calendar year and may vary during the year as personal circumstances change: they remain most stable where employees file tax returns early in tax year.

Revenue Jersey's tax systems and employers' payroll systems can cope with increases in ITIS rates on this basis and no additional costs in effecting such a rate change are anticipated. Minor technical changes would be required to the Income Tax (Jersey) Law 1961 in advance of any change of LTC contribution rate.

I have asked Revenue Jersey to explore the case to create ITIS effective rates to one decimal place. Any such change would require consultation with employers and payroll providers to determine the feasibility of systems changes, together with any necessary legislative amendments.

3.26 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the delay to Phase 1 of the redevelopment of Fort Regent. (WQ.245/2026)

Question

"In relation to the delay of Phase 1 of the redevelopment of Fort Regent (Phase 1), will the Minister advise –

(a) how the 2026 election period contributed to the delay, including any decisions that had to be postponed;

(b) what changes or refinements to Phase 1 have been made, including –
  (i) which body or office was responsible for initiating refinements to the scope of Phase 1;
  (ii) what cost impact, if any, the refinements have had on the budget for the redevelopment of Fort Regent, including on any project management costs incurred by the States of Jersey Development Company;
  (iii) what delays, if any, occurred when approving the refinements; and

(c) the current timeline and scope of Phase 1?"

Answer

(a) The 2026 election period and subsequent establishment of a new Council of Ministers contributed materially to a delay because the Regeneration Steering Group (RSG) could not be convened to consider programme options and emerging cost information during that period.

The RSG exists to provide policy guidance in relation to major regeneration projects, including Fort Regent. The RSG routinely meets on a quarterly basis.

The final meeting of the RSG ahead of the 2026 election period took place on 11th February 2026. At this meeting, the RSG was advised by the States of Jersey Development Company (SoJDC) of an expected delay to the overall programme unless a higher-risk decision was taken to progress planning and technical design works concurrently. The RSG expressed dissatisfaction regarding the delayed timeline and requested the presentation of the two possible timelines at the next meeting of the RSG for its consideration.

Per the established pre-election rules, from the 20th April 2026, the Council of Ministers were restricted in their ability to initiate actions of a continuing or long term character upon which a new Council of Ministers or Minister could be expected to take a different view (States

Assembly | R.32/2026). As a result, the RSG was unable to meet and consider the requested timeline options and therefore was unable to issue a policy direction on changes to the programme until after the elections had been concluded and a new RSG formed.

In the intervening period, Officers were advised by SoJDC at the end of June 2026 (the period between the election and the formation of a new Council of Ministers) that estimated costs had increased to the extent that it would have a material bearing on any future decision of the RSG. Whilst it is understood that the initial £110M cost associated with the programme was identified two years ago, and prior to full feasibility and design works concluding, cost increases arising as a natural progression of the programme, for example inflationary pressures, design changes and safety requirements were compounded by risks unforeseen ahead of the pre-election period such as the impact of the conflict in the Middle East.

Taking into account the magnitude of the cost variance and the range of potential solutions, officers concluded that works on the current programme should be paused until a decision could be made once a new RSG was in place. This action was considered important to ensure that no additional programme costs were incurred that may be later considered abortive by the new Council of Ministers.

Upon the formation of the new Council of Ministers in July 2026, the immediate priority for the Council of Ministers was to begin the development of the Common Strategic Policy and draft Budget, for presentation to the States Assembly. For this reason, the earliest opportunity to convene the newly established RSG was the 17th September 2026.

It is important to be clear that since its first meeting, the RSG has placed a strong focus on resolving plans for the Fort and will be meeting monthly to ensure progress is sustained. At its meeting of the 17th September, in light of increased costs, it was decided that wider options should be evaluated to ensure the redevelopment represents best value for money through an economic analysis.

It was simultaneously recognised that essential core refurbishment activity must continue, including the refurbishment to the roof, internal works to remove asbestos, and, the modernisation of core utilities infrastructure, working within the funding allocation already made in the Budget.

These works - whilst largely representing those originally intended for the first phase of the original two-phase programme – are being rescoped to ensure that they are proportionate and do not compromise the subsequent phase of activity that will still be necessary to bring the building back into full use.

A draft revised scope of work for Phase 1 has already been presented to the RSG at its second meeting on 28th October 2026, and the intention is to progress this towards the opening of an Expression of Interest and then a full tender process, to begin at the earliest opportunity.

As was always the intention, plans for the subsequent phase of works that will define the future use of the Fort will be subject to a full business case and Assembly approval in the next draft Budget.

(b) (i) The body responsible for directing refinements to the scope of Phase 1 is the RSG.

(ii) Changes to the total cost of Phase 1 works are not expected, as the scope was instructed to remain within established funding limits. At the time of answering, SoJDC's revised estimate of project management costs associated with the refined scope has not yet been finalised, whilst not expected to be substantial given a significant proportion of work and planning had already been undertaken to support the original Phase 1 scope.

(iii) As described in the answer to part (a), the new RSG has mobilised refinements to Phase 1 scoping at its earliest opportunity to do so and is committed to closely oversee the progression of the programme moving forwards. There are currently no delays since the altered direction was established.

(c) The revised timeline remains subject to formally agreeing the revised scope of work together with the final procurement programme to mobilise delivery. The Assembly will be aware that existing funding has already been reprofiled in the draft Budget 2027 to reflect the delay that has already occurred. Whilst substantial variance is not expected at this time, the RSG will be prepared to present an Amendment should any variance in profiling become necessary.

3.27 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the medicines regulatory framework. (WQ.246/2026)

Question

"Further to his previous statements that the medicines regulatory framework is robust, will the Minister explain the reasons for commissioning another review of that framework and advise –

(a) what issues or developments have emerged which have led to the review;
(b) the review's aims, objectives, scope and terms of reference;
(c) the timetable for completion of the review and publication of its findings;
(d) whether any amendments to the Medicines (Jersey) Law 1995 or Misuse of Drugs (Jersey) Law 1978 are anticipated; and
(e) whether any changes are being considered to the role, responsibilities or statutory duties of the Chief Pharmacist in relation to drugs, medicines and therapeutics?"

Answer

(A), (B)

In May 2025, despite my reservations, I was advised by a senior member of staff (who is no longer in post) that our medicines regulatory framework was appropriate and robust. However, given these reservations and as set out in the answer to WQ188/2025, I had already arranged for work to commence on a review to determine whether the Medicines (Jersey) Law 1995 and the Misuse of Drugs (Jersey) Law 1978 was actually fit for purpose in a rapidly changing regulatory environment.

The review to which I refer focused on analysing:

- Jersey's current system of regulation, comparing it against recognised international regulatory standards for medicines and medical devices (such as the WHO Global Benchmarking Tool) in order to identify gaps and risks associated with that legislative framework
- how an appropriate regulatory approach could support growth in Jersey's medicines and medical technology sector, providing high level preliminary options for Jersey's regulatory approach to medicines and medical devices.

Importantly that review made it clear that our arrangements are not sufficiently robust, as I was advised, previously, and that work is urgently needed to further our compliance with international standards and support increased regulatory maturity.

A summary of the review findings has already been shared with industry and are provided as an appendix to this answer.

Subsequent to completion of that review, work has now started on developing an enhanced regulatory regime for Jersey.

(C): At this time I am unable to provide a timetable for completion for this work given its technical complexity, the requirement to amend legislation and to establish a regulatory function recognised as competent in other jurisdictions, which is essential to facilitating import and export and our potential, emerging life sciences industry.

(D), (E): This will include:

- amendments to the Medicines (Jersey) Law 1995 and the Misuse of Drugs (Jersey) Law 1978
- consideration of the role and responsibilities of the Chief Pharmacist in relation to drugs, medicines and therapeutics
- further, detailed reviews of complex, technical areas of policy and practice (for example pharmacovigilance)

Appendix: Jersey Medicines and Medical Technologies Governance Reform: review summary

Review summary provided to Minister for Health and Social Services

15 April 2026

1. Purpose and Context

This paper summarises the findings of an initial review of Jersey's medicines and medical technologies (MMT) system[1]. It sets out why reform of the current governance arrangements is required, explains Jersey's current level of system maturity, and recommends a proportionate

pathway to establish a credible, internationally recognised framework aligned to global standards whilst maintaining current business operations.

The objective of this work is to protect public health through effective oversight of medicines and medical technologies while enabling economic growth by creating conditions for a viable life sciences sector. The review concludes that the current system is not adequate to meet either objective on a credible and sustainable basis.

2. Approach and Evidence Base

The findings are based on an expert detailed review of existing legislation, policies, and operational documents, alongside assessment against international benchmarks and global standards. This was complemented by structured engagement with key stakeholders across government, healthcare, industry, and external partners with experience of comparable systems.

Stakeholders identified a clear need for reform of the current governance arrangements. There was a shared recognition that the current system is not sustainable, that greater clarity and transparency are required, and that alignment with global standards is essential for credibility and growth. Taken together, the evidence indicates a clear case for change.

3. Why Change is Necessary

Oversight of medicines and medical technologies is a core government responsibility. Current governance arrangements lack a clear end-to-end framework, with functions fragmented across departments and not consistently meeting modern expectations for transparency and accountability. This creates gaps in lifecycle oversight and increases risks.

From a macroeconomic perspective, a credible governance system aligned to global standards is essential for participation in the international life sciences economy. Other jurisdictions only accept products where oversight meets recognised standards. Without this, Jersey-based products cannot be exported at scale, high-value activity is displaced off-island, and investor confidence is weakened.

4. System Maturity and Global Standards

System maturity reflects how effectively a jurisdiction's governance framework operates across the full lifecycle of medicines and medical technologies, and its alignment with the World Health Organisation's (WHO) international standards. Maturity ranges from fragmented systems (ML1) to stable, globally aligned systems (ML3), and advanced systems (ML4).

Maturity is critical to international trust and the ability to support exports. Trusted systems demonstrate transparency, consistency, and accountability through a designated Competent Authority. A Competent Authority has a clear legal mandate, defined responsibilities, established processes, technical capability, and transparent decision-making, and serves as the point of trust for other jurisdictions.

The review found that Jersey does not currently meet the standard for a globally aligned system. Responsibilities are fragmented, alignment with global standards is limited, and reliance on external partners is informal. Initial review suggests that Jersey is potentially operating at ML1–ML2 maturity so cannot be recognised as a designated Competent Authority in relation to medicines.

Note: The medical devices and diagnostics sector, which has faster and more iterative innovation cycles than the medicines sector, does not require Jersey to have a designed Competent Authority but

does requires a robust legal framework and an associated regulatory authority to ensure compliance with legislation.

5. Summary of Key Findings

The central issue is not a lack of ambition, but limitations in governance and delivery capacity and capability. There is no coherent end-to-end framework, with gaps in oversight across safety monitoring, medical devices, and research. Processes and decisions are not consistently documented or transparent, and key legal provisions remain unenacted or absent.

This increases public health risk and liability, reduces investor and international confidence, and constrains economic development, as Jersey cannot yet demonstrate the governance conditions required for a sustainable sector.

In practical terms, this creates uncertainty for operators, limits market access and export potential, and weakens Jersey's ability to evidence credible end-to-end oversight.

6. Strategic Direction

A range of approaches were considered, from maintaining the current system to developing a fully advanced model. The analysis indicates that maintaining the current position is not viable, and that while short-term improvements are necessary (for example, publication of guidance on manufacturing authorization application processes) they are not sufficient. A structured move to a credible, sustainable fee-based system aligned with global standards is required.

The preferred direction is therefore a proportionate model: one that addresses potential risks, ensures continuity of existing business operations, establishes a coherent and sustainable local governance framework, and uses structured reliance to access external expertise where appropriate.

7. Recommended Approach

A phased approach is recommended. In the short term, the system should be stabilised and strengthened to address immediate risks whilst maintaining continuity for the existing operators. In the medium term, Jersey should establish a well-functioning system aligned to global standards, capable of supporting international confidence and economic activity whilst recovering costs where it is appropriate to do so. Over time, there should remain flexibility to evolve further as the number of operational businesses increases.

This approach should maintain Jersey's autonomy while adopting structured reliance on trusted partners such as the MHRA, ensuring that external expertise is used where capability is not available locally. A clear and coherent governance framework should be established, with defined roles, responsibilities, and transparent processes.

8. Financial and Economic Considerations

Reform should be viewed as economic infrastructure investment rather than departmental expenditure. A governance system aligned to global standards enables export capability, has the potential to attract high-value investment, supports skilled employment, and retains economic activity on-island. Cost recovery through industry fees can support regulatory activity, while maintaining full independence and integrity of decision-making.

Without reform, Jersey will remain excluded from high-value segments of the life sciences sector and continue to lose investment opportunities. Without alignment to global standards, economic potential cannot be realised.

Governance capability is therefore not a downstream benefit of sector growth; it is a precondition for it.

9. Conclusion

The review demonstrates that the current governance system is not adequate, and that there is strong stakeholder support for reform. Alignment with global standards is essential.

A phased transition from stabilisation to a credible, standards-aligned system represents the most proportionate and deliverable approach. This will strengthen patient safety, establish international credibility, enable economic growth, and preserve Jersey's autonomy while leveraging trusted partners.

The conclusion is clear: Jersey cannot rely on current arrangements if it is to protect public health, support regulated activity, and participate meaningfully in the international life sciences economy. Reform is therefore necessary, proportionate, and timely**.**

3.28 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the recurring savings included in the Proposed Budget 2027-2030. (WQ.247/2026)

Question

"Will the Minister provide a breakdown of the recurring savings included in the Proposed Budget 2027-2030, including –

(a) the value of savings arising from reduced operating costs identified by –
    (i) changes in service delivery; and
    (ii) from productivity improvements;

(b) the value of savings attributable to –
    (i) reductions in established posts; and
    (ii) unfilled vacancies; and

the assurance and validation processes to be used to confirm that the savings have been achieved and that there have been no adverse effects to frontline service delivery?"

Answer

Budget 2027 – 2030 incudes recurring savings of £21 million in 2027, including;

- £10.8 million which already been achieved through reduced employer pension contributions to the Public Employees' Pension Fund.

- £0.5m is to be met through the continued consolidation of the Government's office estate agreed in Budget 2025-2028.
- £9.6m is to be met through role savings focused on reducing administrative overheads, simplifying internal processes and ensuring that public resources are directed towards activities that deliver the greatest value and impact for Islanders.

Departmental cash limits have been reduced in line with these proposals, as set out in table 50 on page 109 of the Budget. Departments are expected to continue delivering their statutory and approved services within those revised allocations.

At this stage, Accountable Officers are continuing to develop detailed implementation plans for delivering the proposed £9.6m of role savings. Consequently, a definitive breakdown of all savings by delivery mechanism is not yet available across all departments.

The detailed mix of savings will vary by department and Head of Expenditure, with implementation plans being finalised by Accountable Officers during 2027. Consistent with the response provided to WQ.192/2026, the precise impact on individual posts, vacancies and staffing establishments will only be known once those plans have been completed.

This follows the previous approach for delivering role savings as set out in the previous Budgets for 2025 and 2026, where Accountable Officers have had the flexibility to deliver savings in-year whilst managing the impact on service delivery.

The Government has established a number of assurance and validation mechanisms to confirm that savings are achieved and that service impacts are appropriately managed. These include:

- Monitoring of departmental financial performance through regular budget monitoring and forecasting processes;
- Oversight by Accountable Officers, Executive Leadership Team and Ministers;
- Monthly and quarterly reporting of savings delivery against agreed targets;
- Assessment of operational and service impacts as part of departmental senior leadership team management and planning; and
- Ongoing review of workforce, performance and service delivery metrics to ensure that savings are delivered sustainably and without unintended adverse consequences for frontline services.

Where savings proposals require significant service redesign or workforce changes, departments will be expected to undertake appropriate business planning, consultation and governance processes before implementation.

As implementation plans are finalised, further information on the composition and delivery of savings will become available through normal budget monitoring and reporting arrangements

3.29 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Chief Minister regarding each strategic priority set out in the Common Strategic Policy 2026-2030. (WQ.248/2026)

Question

"For each strategic priority set out in the Common Strategic Policy 2026-2030, will the Chief Minister provide details of the evidence, analysis or assessments used by the Council of Ministers when determining and prioritising funding allocations in the Proposed Budget 2027-2030?"

Answer

The answer to this question had not been received by the Greffier by the 12pm deadline, in accordance with Standing Order 12 (3).

3.30 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) legislation and its impact on the criminal justice system. (WQ.249/2026)

Question

"With reference to the former Minister's letter to the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel dated 13th February 2026, in relation to the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) legislation and its impact on the criminal justice system, will the Minister advise –

(a) whether she agrees with the estimate of the previous Minister that the new VAWG legislation could generate approximately 275 to 300 new crimes by the second year of implementation and, if she does not, detail her current estimate;
(b) what assessments have been undertaken by her department of the sustainability of the obligations arising from the new VAWG legislation; and

whether she has any plans to tackle violence and abuse against all children including boys and, if so, how she will convey this message and what corresponding political and executive resources she will commit to this?"

Answer

(a) In her letter to the CEHA Scrutiny Panel dated 13th February, the previous Minister shared that a detailed analysis of the impact of the VAWG laws was being developed based on the assumed position that the new Laws will generate between 275-300 new crimes by the

second year of implementation.

Further analytical work was subsequently undertaken in February 2026, resulting in the revision of this estimate from 275-300 new crimes to 199-369 new crimes by the second year of implementation. The previous Minister re-issued each of the VAWG Law propositions[1] on 9th March 2026 to ensure that States Members had sight of the revised estimates in advance of the debate on the package of VAWG legislation on 11th March 2026.

I agree with this revised estimate, which was based on significant further analytical work undertaken by the States of Jersey Police, other criminal justice partners and Treasury and Exchequer. It is from this estimate that the calculations relating to the VAWG funding allocated in the Proposed Budget 2027-2030 are based.

(b) Significant analytical work was undertaken prior to the lodging of each of the five VAWG laws in January 2026, to estimate the impact of introducing this new legislation. The first part of this work was led by analysts in the States of Jersey Police, who undertook detailed analysis to estimate the number of new crimes that would be generated by the introduction of these new laws. This work resulted in an estimate that the VAWG laws would generate between 199-369 new crimes by the second year of implementation.

This estimate was then used to forecast the additional capacity and resourcing pressures that would likely be placed on different parts of the criminal justice system as a result of the new legislation. In particular, it was used to forecast demands on the Ministerial functions (including the States of Jersey Police, States of Jersey Prison Service, Jersey Domestic Abuse Service, Dewberry HouseSexual Assault Referral Centre, and Victims First Jersey) and the non-Ministerial functions (including the Law Officers' Department, the Jersey Probation and Aftercare Service, the Judicial Greffe and the Viscount's Department).

Officers within Treasury and Exchequer then worked with each of these services to calculate the amount of additional funding that would be required for each of them to address the resulting additional capacity and resourcing pressures. This assessment identified that a total revenue cost of between £3 – 7 million would be required to effectively operationalise the new legislation. This funding requirement was included in each of the re-issued VAWG Law propositions to ensure States Members were made aware of the financial implications of voting through the new laws. It was also noted that this assessment was based on assumptions about the number of new crimes generated, and that the level of resourcing required would ultimately depend on the incidence and severity of offending that is reported.

As a result, Ministers agreed that the amount of funding provided should be linked to the actual demand on services once the legislation is enacted, with services phased in as necessary to maintain effective service delivery across the criminal justice system.

This resulted in the development of a demand-led funding model which was used to calculate the VAWG legislation funding requirements which were included in the Proposed Government Budget 2027-2030. The overarching aim of this model has been to ensure that the obligations arising from the new legislation can be sustained by a funding response that

is proportionate, reasonable and evidence-led, while primarily ensuring that the demands generated from the new legislation are matched with adequate resourcing at the point of need.

The demand-led funding model works by holding a proportion of funding in the Central Reserve which can then be released to match resources to demand, as required. It relies on agreed forecasts for recorded crimes under the new laws, with movement from the low estimate to the agreed central or high forecast ranges acting as the trigger for funding release. The model is designed to avoid resources arriving too late by combining a mixture of reactive demand measures and forward-looking indicators. The exact thresholds which will need to be met in order to trigger the release of additional funds is yet to be agreed, but discussions are ongoing between services, Justice and Home Affairs, and Treasury and Exchequer and will be finalised in due course.

(c) When I established the violence against women and girls (VAWG) Taskforce and wider workstream, I chose to describe it as such because that is the terminology most widely used to describe the types of violence and abuse that this workstream was primarily seeking to address: domestic abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment. Statistics show that these forms of violence are disproportionately perpetrated against women and girls, but it is important to recognise that men and boys are also victims of these forms of violence and can actually face additional barriers to accessing support or justice because of the stigma that is sometimes associated with male experiences of abuse.

It is important to recognise that all of the work that has been undertaken under the VAWG workstream has aimed to address domestic abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment against victims of every sex and gender. Victims of intimate image abuse, stalking, domestic abuse, strangulation, and threats of sexual harm are all entitled to the same new protections and routes to justice that are established by the incoming VAWG legislation, regardless of their sex or gender. The funding allocated to the operationalisation of these laws has already been the subject of significant discussion within my answer to WQ 208/2026. Our wider work to combat attitudes relating to misogyny and gender inequality as the root causes of VAWG should also be understood as benefitting men and boys, because they address the same underlying forces that contribute to forms of toxic masculinity and the stigma associated with men accessing mental health support.

A key part of my work to tackle violence and abuse against all children, including boys, has been the commissioning of an independent review of the management of domestic abuse cases within the family court system in Jersey. The review has considered how children's voices are captured and listened to within private law family proceedings; and whether decisions and orders made about where a child should live and what contact they should have with their parents, are made with the best interests of the child sufficiently in mind. This work has been led by the experienced Family Law Barrister and Deputy Part-time High Court Judge, Hannah Markham KC. Her final report and recommendations are scheduled to be published in December 2026. It is anticipated that a series of recommendations will be made which aim to improve current arrangements in the family court system so that better outcomes can be delivered for children. £200,000 has been allocated in the Proposed Government Budget 2027-2030 to provide the necessary funds for the implementation of those recommendations over the next four years.

It is recognised that use of the "VAWG" terminology has created some confusion about the scope of the government's work in this area. That is why I chose to rename this workstream when I transitioned the VAWG Taskforce model into a longer-term, multi-agency workstream called the "Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harms" (DASH) Partnership so that the scope of this work is more explicitly captured. This partnership aims to provide strategic oversight and coordination of work to address domestic abuse and sexual harms across the island. A key priority for the partnership is undertaking further work to explore the impact of domestic abuse on children. A subgroup has also been formed which aims to improve the content and delivery of education in these areas. Funding has been allocated within the Proposed Government Budget for a Training and Delivery Support Officer who would be responsible for facilitating many of the activities of the DASH Partnership. A proportion of the funding allocated to "Training and delivery costs" and "Marginalised community engagement" in the Proposed Budget will also provide funds for the activities of the DASH Partnership.

[1] Draft Sexual Offences (Jersey) Amendment Law 202-; Draft Harassment and Stalking (Jersey) Law 202-; Draft Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Amendment Law 202-; Draft Crime (Strangulation) (Jersey) Law 202-; Draft Crime (Public Order) (Jersey) Amendment Law 202-.

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

Can I raise the défaut on Deputy Voisin, please?

The Bailiff:

Are Members content to raise the défaut? The défaut is raised.

Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement:

Could I also raise the défaut on Connétable Troy. He is trying to make connection through Teams, and he is actually online.

The Bailiff:

Are Members content to raise the défaut on the Connétable? The défaut is raised. Thank you.

4. Oral Questions

The Bailiff:

We now move to Oral Questions with notice. There are 18 questions, which I think is just under 8 minutes per question, so we will need to keep to time to ensure that all those questions are responded to.

4.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Chief Minister regarding structures, capacity and capability of the public sector. (OQ.114/2026)

Will the Chief Minister advise what assessment, if any, has been undertaken by the Council of Ministers as to whether the current structures, capacity and capability of the public sector are fit to meet the increasingly complex challenges and costs facing Jersey?

Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister):

Departments continually assess changing demand for their services and the related costs, capacity and capability to determine whether they need to operate differently. This is part of the regular cycle of business, workforce and financial planning and risk management. In addition, more detailed

reviews are undertaken where particular pressures or opportunities are identified. Options are initially assessed by Ministers in their departments and brought to the Council of Ministers, if necessary, for further consideration. Government-wide, we assess future staffing capacity through strategic workforce planning, aligning workforce data, service demand and Government priorities to identify our current and future capability requirements.

4.1.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Thank you to the Chief Minister for his response. Workforce efficiency cannot be judged simply by reductions in expenditure or staffing numbers and Government, as he has said, must first understand what it needs to deliver and what work capabilities are needed. Does the Chief Minister accept that the Government must first have a clear understanding of the structures, the workforce, the skills, the leadership and the organisational capabilities it will need to deliver future public services in an efficient and sustainable way?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Yes, I do, and I believe the Government does have a good overall view and knowledge of that. As I said before, we assess our future staffing capacity through strategic workforce planning that is ongoing continuously across the public sector. I remain confident that we have matters in hand and we are aware of the challenges that face us, and will always be prepared to make sure the public sector is right size and properly prepared.

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

Has any work been done on the cost of risks that may follow such savings or freeze, such as loss of specialist knowledge, single points of failure or statutory duties not being met?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Risk management provides an important mechanism and is part of all of our business planning. Departments are expected to identify and actively manage risks to delivery. That includes risks arising from insufficient capacity, reliance on specialist skills, changing demand, financial pressures or dependencies on particular people, systems or providers. Where these risks become significant, they drive a more detailed assessment, as any risk, as we identify it.

4.1.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Does the Minister know if there are any departmental corporate risk registers that include risks arising from the freeze?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I cannot recall all of the departmental risk registers to hand, but I believe that all risk registers, as I have just mentioned, take into account capacity and reliance on specialist skill. So I am not aware of any risks arising from the ongoing workforce management strategy.

4.1.4 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier:

The Chief Minister mentioned that each department is making assessment about capacity and the planning for the workforce. Would the Chief Minister confirm if the Council of Ministers has been presented with cross-department, cross-Government assessment of capability and capacity?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

That is a work in progress. The Council of Ministers, I understand, have been briefed, and will continue to be briefed as more detail emerges.

4.1.5 The Connétable of St. Helier:

Would the Chief Minister consider to publish it when it will be presented at cross-Government assessment of delivery capacity and identify commitments going forward for the workforce strategy?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Yes.

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

In his answers, the Chief Minister has used the rather technical term "strategic workforce planning". I wonder if he could give the Assembly a practical example of what strategic workforce planning means and how that has ended up with a result.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

If I could perhaps use Health as a good example. As a small Island we cannot expect to maintain every specialist capability on-Island, so Health and Care Jersey needs to continually consider where specialist capacity should be maintained locally and where different service models, including off-Island provision, partnerships or visiting specialists, are more appropriate. That is fundamentally an assessment of capability capacity. Demand and affordability is an example of strategic workforce planning.

4.1.7 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Obviously the needs are going to differ in different departments, so how is strategic workforce planning adopted differently in different departments?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

In a similar way to what I have described. Government-wide we assess future staffing capacity through strategic workforce planning. That includes aligning workforce data, service demand and Government priorities to identify current and future capability needs.

4.1.8 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I am trying to establish whether the Government is designing the public service that it needs for the next decade, or simply trying to make the existing structure fit a tighter budget. My final supplementary question is this.

[10:00]

Given the 3-year Budget for 2028 to 2030, and the C. and A.G.'s (Comptroller and Auditor General) repeated concerns about strategic workforce planning, will the Chief Minister commit to establishing a target operating model for the public services before the Budget is finalised so that future spending and workforce decisions are driven by what Government needs to deliver rather than simply by the need to make savings.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

The Deputy made reference to a model, I could not quite ... could she repeat that part?

The Bailiff:

Target operating model.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

This current Government are putting in place a budgetary process and the next Budget will be a 3-year Budget, if the Assembly approves, which will focus on the results of the strategic workforce planning we are doing now. Underpinning that will be, I believe, a more stable framework for the public sector. But we are also mindful that in the changing world and the onset of new technology, including artificial intelligence, we want to remain flexible. I think it would be wrong to put in place

a structure that looks 10, 15, 20 years ahead right now, when we need to retain some flexibility in our strategic workforce planning. Always, it is important to remember, that our resources are finite. Our financial position has to be managed carefully, so we have to make sure we prioritise and make sure the public service is fit for purpose accordingly.

4.2 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Housing regarding assisted home ownership schemes. (OQ.118/2026)

Further to his response to Written Question 188/2026, when will the Minister decide which assisted home ownership schemes to introduce or expand; and when does he intend to publish the proposed funding, delivery responsibilities and number of households to be helped, distinguishing this from any additional Government commitment from existing Andium Homes and States of Jersey Development Company provision?

Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour (The Minister for Housing):

I thank the Deputy for the question. I am considering the role that assisted home ownership could play in improving access to home ownership for Islanders. No decision has yet been taken on whether assisted home ownership schemes should be introduced or expanded, nor on the type of scheme that might be taken forward. However, I would hope that Ministers will be in a position to consider the available options and determine a preferred approach in early 2027, allowing any funding implications to inform future budget considerations. As no decisions have yet been taken, details such as funding arrangements, delivery responsibilities and the number of households that may be assisted have not yet been determined. Any proposals will need to be carefully assessed to ensure they represent value for money, support access to home ownership and do not give rise to unintended consequences in the wider housing market. Should I decide to proceed with specific proposals, further details will be published as part of the normal decision-making process.

4.2.1 Deputy C.S. Alves:

The Minister mentioned early 2027 before any decisions are made. When does he envision that households and people will benefit from these decisions?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

All being well, if we come to the right decision during those budgetary discussions, then that would roll out in the next 3-year budgeting phase, so that would then gather momentum towards the end of this political term.

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

What evidence of need is the Minister using to decide between helping first-time buyers or helping people move up the ladder or indeed whether to do assisted purchase schemes at all?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I thank the Deputy for that question. Obviously we have got reports from Statistics Jersey which show us the housing need in Jersey, so there is lots of data that we could draw on and will continue to draw on, because the housing market is an ever-changing landscape. We have seen even since 2022 the way the market has taken a drop, something that we have not seen in Jersey for a long time. We will continue to monitor the trends, we will continue to monitor how affordable it is for people to purchase through normal means, we will continue to monitor interest rates which have just increased to 4 per cent. There are lots of data that we will draw on and continue to keep an eye on that will inform that decision-making process.

4.2.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Minister for his answer. In Written Question 188, the Minister said the First Step scheme had provided useful evidence. Will he publish that evidence ahead of any decision-making?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

Yes, I fully intend to do that.

4.2.4 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

The Deputy, like me, is old enough to know parents who may have benefited from the States loan scheme. Does the Minister have any plans to look at initiatives to support and unlock access to borrowing, especially for young people who have their whole lives to pay back a loan? What appetite does he have for States involvement, if any, in this scheme?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I remember with fondness the States loan scheme because I am sure there are lots of Members of this Assembly that benefited from that initiative. In fact, when I was at the Parish Hall on Sunday this very subject came up, and on a table of 8 people about 7 of them had bought their first property through the States loan scheme. But I think that is nostalgia. I think there are lots of other options available, not just shared equity schemes. I think there are opportunities to look at how we can help people gather towards getting a deposit together which, for a lot of people, can be a barrier, and perhaps we could do that in the most tax-efficient way to encourage people to save towards having a deposit. That in itself might assist them to get into the purchase market. Did I miss any part of that question?

The Bailiff:

We will soon find out.

4.2.5 Deputy M. Tadier:

It sounded like maybe a loan for a deposit, but I do not know if that was what the answer was. Does the Minister agree that if in Jersey generally, with perhaps some exceptions, if you can afford to rent, you can afford to buy? If you can afford to rent year on year, you can probably afford to buy, and therefore is it access to borrowing that is the issue, and that there is an issue with young people or any people getting access to bank loans? What steps will he take specifically in that area?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

Lots of people who are in the rental sector would be able to take that next step and purchase, but very often the barrier, as far as I understand, is people being able to gather a deposit together, and most lenders will still want a loan to value of at least 10 per cent. So very often people will need to gather a deposit before they can get that loan. It is about looking at all the available options. It is about looking at how shared equity schemes work, how efficient they are, how people can be assisted with the monies that are available. But we also need to be creative and look at what the other options are that might assist people.

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

The Minister said that there are still a lot of decisions that need to be made by himself and other Ministers, and then he alluded to the upcoming possible 3-year Budget. Could he let the Assembly know when he thinks he will be in a position to put a business case forward to Treasury.

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

That process will be starting early next year, where we will start to look at the evidence and look at the options that are available and the costings and put that forward as a growth bid.

4.2.7 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

The Minister for Treasury and Resources in the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel hearing yesterday said that he anticipated being able to present the Budget in the summer of next year, earlier than

usual. Could the Minister clarify whether he has received any detail of the process that he needs to follow from Treasury?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I have spoken to officers to work out exactly how we would lay this into the discussions and into the Budget process.

4.2.8 Deputy C.S. Alves:

The Minister mentioned publishing the findings of the First Step scheme; can he clarify when he will be doing that and if he is confident that the Budget will allow him money beyond the schemes from Andium and S.o.J.D.C. (States of Jersey Development Company)?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

Yes, we will publish that information as soon as possible. Sorry, the second part of that question?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Is he confident that he will be given enough money in this Budget beyond the schemes that are already being provided from Andium and S.o.J.D.C.?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

Again, all of that is still under discussion and is still being worked up.

4.3 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Chief Minister regarding residential and nursing home capacity. (OQ.121/2026)

Given that responsibility for meeting the accommodation and care needs of Jersey's ageing population spans several Ministerial portfolios, will the Chief Minister advise whether a single Minister has overall responsibility for ensuring sufficient residential and nursing home capacity, alongside the development of retirement communities and supported living, is available to meet current and future demand, and if not, why not?

Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister):

In response to the Deputy's specific question, I can confirm that no one Minister has overall responsibility for developing care homes, retirement communities and supported living. This is because, as the Deputy pointed out, the issues run across a range of Ministerial portfolios, so Ministers work together where their specific responsibilities overlap. In addition, the Council of Ministers holds specific responsibility for the Common Population Policy. This policy, as Members will know, addresses a range of the demographic challenges, including the impact of the growth of the older population and the need to ensure the Island has suitable housing and care and nursing homes to meet the growing demand. All Ministers work together to maintain this policy. The latest report on the Common Population Policy was published earlier this year by the previous Government. This includes details of Government activity under the ageing world road map. I would also finish by informing Members that officials have been tasked with putting together a strategy and proposal, specifically looking at care and nursing homes on the demographic challenges. I will report back to relevant Ministers, including the Minister for Health and Social Services, in due course.

4.3.1 Deputy S.J. Gleave:

I am really pleased to hear that that work is under progress. That is very welcomed. Given the vulnerability of Jersey's care sector, should a major provider withdraw from the Island ... and putting this in context, a small provider withdrew within the last 18 months and it took 6 months to house 8 residents. Can the Minister confirm who is responsible for assessing that risk if a major provider withdrew and ensuring contingency arrangements are in place, including sufficient alternative capacity to accommodate affected residents?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Again, I think the Minister for Health and Social Services leads on a number of those issues, especially related to extended care. That is one of the issues we have asked officials to look at the contingency for such circumstances. We also want to make sure we have a plan in place that sees a number of places growing. I think also an important consideration is to make sure we do not end up with care home and nursing home stock in the hands of too few. I think it needs to be spread commercially. Perhaps we could look at bringing some of those facilities in-house, run by Government or Parishes, or working more closely with the sector to provide more cover.

4.3.2 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier:

Can the Chief Minister tell the Assembly how many extra residential and nursing beds Jersey will need by 2035? If that figure does not exist yet, who is responsible for producing it around the Ministers who have a political responsibility?

The Bailiff:

I think that may be some way from the question. I am not sure it is reasonable to expect the Chief Minister to know the answer, unless he does.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

It is almost a 65(c) Standing Order one. I think I would need notice of that, but I will provide the information.

The Bailiff:

If you want to ask another question.

[10:15]

4.3.3 The Connétable of St. Helier:

The Chief Minister mentioned the Parishes are already providing some sheltered accommodation and care beds. How does the Chief Minister think to work with the Parishes to ensure that we have a joined-up approach between the Government and the Parishes to support the necessary numbers of care and residential support?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I think the Parishes are doing an extremely good job with the care homes they run, and should know that the Government stands ready to provide support wherever needed. I understand, where required, communication between Parishes and Government from the care home perspective is working well at the moment. But I think that the Parishes are a good example of where they do provide care homes, providing them commercially successfully and also competitively.

4.4 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding additional consultant neurology capacity. (OQ.111/2026)

Further to the Minister's response to Written Question 230/2026, what additional consultant neurology capacity has been secured to reduce the waiting list, and when will patients begin to benefit from this resource?

Senator T.J.A. Binet (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

As the Deputy knows, Written Question 230/2026 was answered on 2nd November of this year, so I am sure it will come as no surprise to the Deputy to hear that nothing substantial has changed in the space of those 8 days. That said, I can confirm that the provision of a good neurological service remains at the very top of our agenda. Indeed, only yesterday, I met again with the Managing Director of Hospital Services, the Deputy Medical Director, the Director of Workforce, and the Chief

Operating Officer with this and only this on the agenda. At that meeting, I was updated on a range of actions that are currently underway to recruit 2 full-time neurologists and further efforts to obtain short and medium-term support for this area of work. I have asked for the details of the current initiative to be put in writing, and I am very happy to share those details with the Deputy as soon as they have been completed. In the meantime, I think it is important to mention that currently there is an acute shortage of neurologists, so recruitment is proving really difficult. Hopefully we will have some positive news in the near future, but I am reluctant to put a precise date on that, certainly not at this point in time. I hope that information is helpful.

4.4.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Given that this has been a prolonged issue and given the uncertainty that patients face in relation to this, what work has the department done to ensure that patients are well communicated to and that their concerns are listened to, and that any uncertainty that they feel is being dealt with by the department in a compassionate way?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

It is difficult to describe precise ways of communication other than the fact that I know and trust the team that are in charge of this, and they are doing their very best in, as I know from yesterday, in very difficult circumstances. I do not mind apologising to all the people that are being affected by this. It is a cause of great concern to me, as indeed it is a cause of a great concern to the team involved. I just want everybody to know that nobody is taking this lightly. We are all very concerned about it. A maximum amount of effort is being put in to put the job straight.

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

I ask this question because I have a constituent currently in this position, and I hope that the answer may be a very simple one from the Minister. Will the Minister commit to working with his Ministerial colleagues, particularly the Minister for Social Security, to ensure that no Islanders are having their benefits delayed or impacted by this? I am thinking particularly around assessments for things like L.T.I.A. (Long Term Incapacity Allowance) and others to ensure that nobody is being impacted beyond just the healthcare, it is also about benefits as well.

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

This is all very true, and I hope that the evidence would suggest that I have a very good working relationship with the Minister for Social Security. I think we have got a great number of email exchanges to prove that we both work very constructively together.

4.4.3 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Could I request, the Minister said he would share the actions with Deputy Feltham; could he share it with all States Members and perhaps consider it being made public as well, please?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

I am certainly very happy to do that indeed.

4.4.4 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

What does the Minister mean by the provision of a good neurological service and how does that differ from what we currently have?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

Well we have not got a full complement of the people that we need to run the service. I think we need 2 full-time neurologists, and that is exactly what we are trying to obtain, and we need a full supporting team. I am not a clinician. I am able to get a structure chart of what we are intending to put in place, but I cannot recite that off the top of my head. But there are a number of supporting

people that you need to run a good neurological service, and that is exactly what we are trying to establish.

4.4.5 Deputy M. Tadier:

With the Minister's business background he will know about supply and demand, does he think that if people are not coming to Jersey to work in certain roles is it a question that they need to be given more pay and a better package, or if not, what is the problem?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

All of these things have actually been discussed. It is an extremely difficult situation, because when you start giving completely different terms to one clinician you end up with a snowball effect, and the difficulty is that we can barely cope on the budget that we have, and if we start that process, that is going to be difficult. I will say it is not necessarily the silver bullet that is going to cure all the problems in any event. What I did learn yesterday, which disturbed me, is that the Royal College of Physicians have contacted our senior team to say that some of the negative things that are appearing in the media could be having an adverse effect on our recruitment. I put that out as a message for the media to take heed of that. Sometimes exposing things that we are trying to deal with as comprehensively as we can does not always have the desired effect. In fact, it can make bad matters worse.

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

I hardly think that the media is going to prevent people from coming here for work. The Minister, in his account on 3rd November, states that 42 cases are classified as urgent. Can he advise the Assembly how that urgency is being dealt with, given that if those patients are not looked after urgently, that the prognosis for them will only deteriorate? Can he give us some content and detail as to what he is doing to deal with that?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

There was a comment before the question, and I would like to comment on that comment. It all forms part of the question and I think we have to be very clear that when we get a message from the Royal College of Physicians telling us, informing us specifically, that what is appearing in the media is causing us difficulties, there must be a reason for that. I say it because I think we should take it seriously.

Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement:

If I may, with all due respect ...

The Bailiff:

No.

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

In terms of the 42 people, each one of those, given that they are on the serious list, will have been coped with differently. I certainly cannot provide a list of the way they are being treated. I am very happy to provide more details in general terms, but that is a very specific and detailed question, which I do not think I could be expected to answer here and now, but very happy to provide a summary of ... perhaps they could be put into categories and I can summarise in writing for the Deputy the actions that have been taken. I will make the point again, the people that are running the service are taking this exceptionally seriously and are not at all happy about the position that they are confronting. It is a serious matter and it has been taken extremely seriously.

4.4.7 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I do not accept that we need to have the individual details of the 42 cases. My question was more about what activity is the department undertaking to try to find services that will address the urgency in the form of commissioning or trying to develop new ways of trying to get clinicians over here that will provide the support that patients need at this time.

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

I would like to repeat the paragraph that I made in my original response. I have asked for details of the current initiatives to be put in writing, and I would be very happy that the Deputy and the Assembly and the public get to see that as soon as it has been completed.

4.4.8 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I have got many questions, but I will go with this one. In the absence of suitable on-Island services, what actions is the Minister taking to ensure that patients have access to off-Island services where that is required and where they have urgent need?

Senator T.J.A. Binet:

We have got a whole network of communication with the people that can provide neurological services. I am satisfied with what was said to me yesterday, that the team is making every effort to work with those services so that people that are particularly on the emergency list can be referred as soon as possible to U.K. providers. I make the point again, I am very happy to share those actions once they have been put in writing.

4.5 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée of St. Helier South of the Chief Minister regarding the International Cultural Centre (OQ.109/2026)

Will the Chief Minister provide an update on the services currently provided by the International Cultural Centre and the support, if any, it offers to migrant workers facing work and life difficulties who are seeking assistance in navigating the different Government departments in Jersey?

Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister):

Deputy Porée has kindly agreed for Senator Miles to take questions.

Senator H.M. Miles (Assistant Chief Minister - rapporteur):

The International Cultural Centre, known as the I.C.C., provides support to Islanders from diverse cultural backgrounds with a particular focus on new arrivals and minority communities. Its services include community outreach and engagement, information and signposting, a community grants programme and a confidential personalised casework service. A key part of the I.C.C.'s work is supporting individuals who are experiencing work or life difficulties and helping them navigate public services. The I.C.C. receives referrals covering a wide range of issues including employment, housing, healthcare, immigration, residency, financial wellbeing, English language learning and social integration. The I.C.C. works directly with individuals to understand their circumstances and provide tailored support. This includes helping people access the appropriate government services, explaining processes, assisting with applications, liaising with departments on their behalf where appropriate, and signposting them to relevant community and voluntary sector organisations. The service has supported individuals facing employment challenges, housing difficulties, residency and immigration matters, access to healthcare, language barriers and family reunification applications. Through advocacy, practical assistance and partnership working, the I.C.C. helps people overcome obstacles and access the support available to them. It complements the work of government departments by providing culturally responsive personalised support to those who may otherwise struggle to navigate processes and services.

4.5.1 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Given the positive answer from the Minister, could the Minister please outline what evidence has she got that the community of migrant workers, including seasonal hospitality and agriculture workers, are being reached effectively.

Senator H.M. Miles:

One of the focuses of the I.C.C. is on community outreach, and I think that is a very important aspect to develop over the next few years. The other development that we are looking at is a hub and spoke model whereby the hub of the I.C.C. will remain in Union Street at the Customer Services Department downstairs, but for certain times and days there will be a presence in the Town Hall which hopefully will give extra confidence to people that the service provided is being independent.

4.5.2 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier:

Would the Minister also advise the Assembly that as we are finalising the arrangement, that in the new year the group meeting with the community leader will take place to explore through the community leaders the challenges that the minority is facing?

Senator H.M. Miles:

I thank the Connétable for the question. In previous Governments there was a political oversight group for the International Cultural Centre. I proposed to establish a steering group instead of a political oversight group. I was due to meet with the Connétable to discuss that memorandum of understanding today, but we are going to do that later on in the week. So, yes, I can give the Connétable that assurance that there will be significant community involvement in the International Cultural Centre moving forward.

[10.30]

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

I note that the Assistant Chief Minister has mentioned that she will look into a steering group and speak with the Connétable. There are also other Members in this Assembly who have been at the forefront of this, including myself in the last term. So will she, in the first instance, commit to speaking to all of us, ideally? Will she also consider whether a steering group is the best way forward, as this was how it was initially set up when it was first set up, and is she open to maybe revisiting that and maybe looking at other options?

Senator H.M. Miles:

I thank the Deputy for the question. Perhaps I should have said that the steering group would be extending an invite to the existing States Members who were on the political oversight group, and I had assumed that they would welcome the opportunity to join that group. But I take nothing for granted, and there will be an opportunity and an invite to all Members of the Assembly who wish to join the steering group.

4.5.4 Deputy C.S. Alves:

I thank the Assistant Chief Minister for that assurance. Is the Assistant Chief Minister confident that the services and the future of the I.C.C. are secure and will be able to be continued, at least for this term of office, and hopefully into the future?

Senator H.M. Miles:

Yes, I can give the Assembly that guarantee.

4.5.5 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

My next question, the supplementary, will be on the lines of Deputy Alves, and is to ask the Minister, if you do consider that I.C.C. is adequately staffed to meet the current demand and are there any plans to increase funding or staffing if demand continues to grow?

Senator H.M. Miles:

I am satisfied that at the current time, before we establish the steering group and do a little bit more work on the role of the I.C.C., that the budget allocated is sufficient for the purpose.

4.6 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for Planning and Regulation regarding the Jersey Care Commission's reduction in budget. (OQ.104/2026)

Will the Minister explain the rationale for the reduction in budget allocated to the Jersey Care Commission, advise what risk assessment, if any, has been undertaken regarding potential consequences to vulnerable people in care, and state whether this reduction in funding received the unanimous support of the Council of Ministers?

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat (The Minister for Planning and Regulation):

The Jersey Care Commission has been asked to deliver savings of £84,000 from a total budget of over £2 million as part of the Cabinet Office's contribution to overall Government savings requirements of £9.6 million. The rationale for these savings is set out in the Budget, which was approved by the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers did not consider the specific reduction of this nor of similar reductions in other budgets. The savings are necessary to help strengthen the Island's long-term fiscal position while protecting investment in priority public services. The savings programme focuses on reducing administrative overheads, simplifying internal processes, and ensuring that public resources are directed towards activities that deliver the greatest value and impact for Islanders. The Cabinet Office is in active discussions with the Commission to ensure that this will not affect its operations in 2027, and that the first inspections of the hospital take place as planned next year.

4.6.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

I was pleased to attend the briefing that the Jersey Care Commission made available to all Members yesterday. In their strategic document for next year, it highlights the fact that from 2024's base budget from Government, which was £1.9 million almost, it is going down to £1.7 million, just under, next year. This is despite the fact that they are taking on extra regulation following last year's legislative changes, and there is also a removal of the registration fees, which cost them another £40,000 a year. Is it really viable to expect an organisation, which we are giving more responsibility to, to operate on less in real terms, given the fact that they are the first line and perhaps the only line of defence that some vulnerable and lonely elderly people and others in Jersey have against neglect or possible mistreatment?

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

The Commission is being asked to make savings, as indeed are all parts of Government and other regulators. The use of modern technology enables things to be done at less cost than was previously the case. The last thing we want to see is a reduction in the ability of the Commission to perform its functions and, as the Member has correctly said, it is taking on new responsibilities in respect of the hospital. We are talking regularly with the Commission to ensure that they are able to deliver their programme of work. Of course they would like more resources, and of course we would like to give them more resources, as I would like to see more resources devoted to other regulatory functions for which I have responsibility. But we have to recognise our overall budgetary position and the need to ensure that the Island is run in a financially, fiscally responsible position. I think asking the Commission and indeed other semi-independent bodies related to Government to make the same sort of savings as we are asking of government departments is a reasonable thing to do.

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

The Minister mentioned that the Cabinet Office is currently working with the Care Commission to get assurance that it can meet all of its obligations. Why did the Minister not seek that assurance prior to the Budget being agreed and launched?

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

This is just part of the normal process. I do not think this would have come as a huge surprise to the Commission. The Commission is well aware of the budgetary constraints under which the Government is having to operate. I am absolutely sure they are right to say that they would like more resources, and that the less resources they have the less they are able to do. As I have indicated, I have exactly the same situation with all the regulatory functions that are undertaken under my responsibility. There is a long list of things we would like to do. There are things we would like to put more resource into and to do better, but I do not think it is reasonable to exempt independent regulators from the same constraints that we are imposing on our own regulatory functions.

4.6.3 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

The Minister said that he doubts that this would have been a surprise to the Commission, however in correspondence to the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel the Commission notes that it had worked on its business plan and put that forward to Government ahead of this decision being made. It feels like there has been an issue with regard to process here. Would the Minister commit to looking at the process that was followed and seeking assurances that the Commission can do the work that is so important and needs to be done within the budgets. If it cannot, will the Minister commit to ensuring that the right budget is available for the Commission.

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

I think that is an excellent point and I will commit to looking at the process to see what was followed this year and improvements we can make for future years. We are looking towards a longer-term budget for next year and it will be important to have correct processes when dealing with such an important regulatory body as the Care Commission.

4.6.4 Deputy M. Tadier:

I am concerned about the phrasing of the Minister suggesting that they are wanting more resources when actually what they are facing here is a cut in real terms and in actual monetary terms. I think the message is that they would like at least the same and certainly not a cut; not necessarily more. To get to the heart of the Minister's response, does he accept that it is the independence of the Care Commission as a regulator which is at question? If it is possible for any Government to effectively limit what they may be doing in terms of their effectiveness and their scrutiny of Government, the job that they have been asked to do, by impending threats of cutting their budget every year, in fact that independence fundamentally come under question. Is that something the Minister shares my concern about?

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

The Member has raised a very good point which applies well beyond this particular regulatory body. It is important that they have an element of independence. On the other hand, they are reliant on some Government funding. There are some regulators that are entirely funded by the fees that they charge to the bodies that they regulate, and that can give them more independence. But regulation is a public good, and it is questionable as to how far the bodies being regulated should be paying for that. I could ask the Minister for Health and Social Services whether he would like to pay for the cost of regulating the hospital, but I do not think I would get a favourable reply there. That would simply be coming from another bit of Government. But I think the point made is an extremely good one of how do we ensure, in looking at regulation generally, that we can protect the independence of regulators and have a funding model that works. There is no perfect answer. It is a balance between

fees - and the Commission does charge some fees - and the amount of money that the Government feels able to allocate, bearing in mind all the other calls for Government expenditure.

4.7 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St Helier North of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding private rental income. (OQ.116/2026)

Will the Minister advise the total amount of Government revenue derived from private rental income generated over the last 5 years and the forecast revenue from the same source for 2027?"

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean (The Minister for Treasury and Resources):

I have to assume that the Deputy is seeking information on the income tax revenue from private rental property. Unfortunately I am not able to answer this question the way I suspect the Deputy might like. However private rental income is of course taxable. In Jersey, tax is charged on total income rather than on each income source separately, such as private rental properties. Because income and allowances vary from person to person, the same amount of rental income can result in different tax amounts. For example, due to our generous personal allowances, a taxpayer receiving only rental income could receive over £20,000 from this source without paying any tax. In another example, someone who has £20,000 of employment income and £10,000 of rental income is taxed on the total income of £30,000. There is no way to determine which source of income is below the threshold, as it were, and which is taxed. £10,000 of rental income could result in no tax and in some tax or tax at 20 per cent. So it will depend on an individual's circumstances as to whether the rental income is taxed in full, in part, or not at all.

4.7.1 Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Does the Minister agree with me that this information should be collected by the Government?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

I did not get the last part of his question, it should be ...?

The Bailiff:

Collected by the Government.

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

It is collected; taxes are collected by the Government.

The Bailiff:

Could you ask the question again?

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Yes, I will ask the question again. Does the Minister agree with me that the information should be made available separately on the income tax form so the Government actually understands how much rental income has been derived and how much potentially is taxable altogether?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean:

We could look at the form to see if greater clarity could be achieved in that regard. That is a possibility. We do know the amount of tax raised from rental properties. What we do not know is the individual tax treatment because of the differences of each individual circumstances.

4.8 Deputy L.D. Carpenter of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Housing regarding Andium home exchanges and refusals of housing offers. (OQ.107/2026)

Further to Oral Question 96/2026 and his subsequent correction of 22nd October 2026, regarding Andium home exchanges and refusals of housing offers, will the Minister advise whether he intends

to review Gateway priority rules for applicants who accept an available home while awaiting a more suitable property, and consider reinstating a general home exchange scheme, and if not, why not?

Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour (The Minister for Housing):

I thank the Deputy for the question. It is important that Gateway applicants' housing needs are assessed accurately and consistently from the outset. Social housing providers then seek to make offers of accommodation that are appropriate to the assessed needs, including any relevant medical welfare or support requirements. Where concerns arise that an assessment or allocation does not properly reflect an applicant's housing need, these matters can be raised with the Gateway and the relevant social housing provider for review. While I am aware of concerns regarding applicants accepting accommodation that does not fully meet their housing needs while awaiting a more suitable property, such cases are uncommon and it remains rare for applicants to be offered accommodation that does not meet their assessed housing need.

[10:45]

Formal home exchange schemes have not operated for several years, having been found to be costly and impractical to administer, while also bypassing important housing needs assessment and safeguarding processes. I remain satisfied that the Gateway is the best means of ensuring that housing need is assessed fairly and consistently. I have therefore no plans to review Gateway priority rules or reinstate a general home exchange scheme. My priority is to ensure that housing need is assessed fairly, that social housing is allocated effectively, and that those with the greatest housing need continue to be appropriately prioritised.

4.8.1 Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

Given that the Minister's initial answers to the Assembly were unfortunately inaccurate, what checks has he introduced to ensure that Members and applicants receive accurate information going forward.

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I immediately emailed all States Members to advise of that slightly incorrect information, but this is about communication, this is about making sure that we are properly describing, first, that housing need has to be based on a proper assessment. That includes medical need, so we have written to G.P.s (general practitioners) to advise that when an application goes through their G.P. to highlight a particular medical need, that is based on a proper diagnosis and a proper medical opinion. The other thing that I am currently doing is I am reassessing the numbers of people on the Gateway, with a view to cleansing the data to make sure that everyone who is on those particular bands still have a need for housing accommodation and that we have their up-to-date contact details. So we will end up with better data and probably slightly less people that we are communicating with, effectively.

4.8.2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

One of the criticisms of the term "choice-based letting system" that I picked up from constituents in St. Brelade over my 18 years is that the "choice" part is perhaps put there for little more than a little bit of humour, and choice is a fundamental problem for those in social housing. Does the Minister accept that place-making is part of the Bridging Island Plan and that community is fundamentally important to those in Jersey, and that if somebody has grown up or spent their time living in, for example, Georgetown, Longueville, Red Houses, Les Quennevais, that they should not simply be asked to accept a choice of one, 2 or 3 that might be in St. Helier somewhere - another part of the Island - and that the ability to remain in the communities that they have grown up in, where their family or their social network is, is both important for them and their mental wellbeing?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I do recognise that people will like to continue to reside in the communities where they were brought up or become accustomed to living. The fact is the housing stock is precious and housing needs vary

by individual, so what we can do is we can make sure that the property which is offered meets that housing need. What we are unable to do is promise that that property will be in a particular Parish or in a particular district. That is purely because there is a certain amount of pressure on the Gateway to make sure that it delivers, and when properties come up through the different social housing providers, we are unable to offer people a particular Parish or a particular district that they will end up residing in.

4.8.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

Does the Minister think there needs to be a joined-up approach from Andium in terms of their policy and their outcomes? Because if you have a scenario - and it is exactly the case in St. Brelade - where they are selling off key social housing infrastructure to first-time buyers and not building or making any other rented accommodation available, necessarily that means there will be fewer rental properties in St. Brelade than perhaps in the west of the Island, so it gives those renters less choice. He has used the word "cleansing", and I hesitate to use this, but that we could be sleepwalking into a form of social cleansing that is going on, whereby a gentrification of one area comes at the cost of concentrating social housing in other areas, and we lose that balance that people have grown up in and we lose exactly that communal balance that makes Jersey a special place currently.

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

No, I do not recognise that. Ultimately, people who purchase homes that were originally for rental are residing in that Parish. They might aspire to purchase a property in that Parish, so it is 2 different parts of the market. Of course Andium in particular want to service both those parts of the market. It benefits one part of the community, and it is not necessarily over another part of the community, it is the way that Andium have developed their housing structure.

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

In his initial answers to Deputy Carpenter's questions, he mentioned - and throughout - assessing housing needs and welfare requirements. Is the Minister confident that these assessments are done fairly and properly?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I have regular catch-ups with the Gateway team, not least because when there are specific cases that come across my desk that I need to have more information on, and my experience of the team has been that they are always professional, they are always looking to fulfil people's proper unmet needs. I guess the slight difficulty of course is it is what is need against aspirations, and just occasionally people will want a property in a specific location or of a particular type. We do not have that luxury of being able to necessarily segment it by those particular requests, but what we are able to do is offer people properties that meet their assessed housing need, which has been properly and professionally assessed and communicated with the individual.

4.8.5 Deputy C.S. Alves:

I have dealt with cases where I have had to step in to stop evictions of vulnerable people in the past and I have found ... well, first of all, that is not my place to do really, but I have had to advocate for certain vulnerable individuals. My concern stems from the actual assessment requirements. I understand that G.P.s' submissions are extremely important. However, they are not the only and single-most important contribution. I think it is really important that any assessment requirements incorporate other contributions from maybe other interested parties or other parties that are supporting individuals. So I would like to ask the Minister, is he open to looking into what exactly the assessment requirements involve and what weighting is given to the different contributions that are required throughout this assessment and how welfare is measured?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

Yes, I will look as widely as we possibly can, but we still do need to prioritise, and the fundamental question is, how many bedrooms does that person or that family require? The second thing is, is there a safeguarding issue, is there a medical need and how do we best fulfil those criteria? Of course we can drill down as far as we possibly can within the stock that we have got, but there are proper processes that the Gateway team work against to make sure that people get the proper property which is allocated to them, according to their assessed needs.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

I am not sure my question was answered. I asked if the Minister was open to looking into what an assessment involves and maybe revisiting that.

The Bailiff:

Yes. Could you respond to that part of the question?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

Yes, absolutely. I am always open to making the process better and looking at the criteria that we currently use.

The Bailiff:

A final question from Deputy Gleave and Deputy Wilson before the final one from Deputy Carpenter.

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

I recognise that, as Deputies, we tend to hear from those experiencing problems with their housing, which may give us a bit of a skewed perspective, so I welcome your assurance that cases are rare where their needs are not met. But how are you measuring that and what evidence supports that assessment to give us further reassurance?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

The assessments are carried out by the Gateway team. They keep that data, I have access to that data, but of course the tale of the tape is the Gateway numbers themselves. What we do know is the numbers of people on the Gateway, if nothing else, they are about the same numbers as the number of properties that turn over, particularly from Andium and other social housing providers, each year. But Andium, in particular, have got a strong building programme of over 300 properties coming onstream into next year and the year after. What we do know is pressure on the Gateway will dramatically reduce in the coming years, but we always need to keep it under review.

4.8.7 Deputy S.J. Gleave:

I welcome any data that you can share in terms of the actual recording of where needs are not met, which I think is the bit that was slightly missed there, but would you consider systematically recording and analysing the reoccurring issues so that we can learn from those individual cases and ensure those findings help shape the future housing requirements and we make sure that those findings go through to the briefs for our social housing providers?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I think where we can anonymise that data and turn it just into pure numbers of unmet need and what part of that need that was unmet, how can we improve that, of course we would be open to looking into that.

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

I just want to thank the Gateway for the work that they do, but I was speaking to a constituent last week who says that she has been on band 1 for 3 years. I wondered whether the Minister, given what he has just said about the assessment of need and the fact that you take into consideration issues like

safety and medical need, he would look at those who have been on the Gateway at band 1 for over 12 months to see how they can be prioritised.

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

Band 1 will also include transfers, not just people who desperately need to have accommodation, so I would imagine anyone who has been on for that particular length of time would be a transfer. Now, that does not mean that they are not living in unsuitable accommodation, but they are not at risk of becoming homeless. So what I would say to the Deputy is if she would like to forward me that case, I will absolutely look at it as an individual.

4.8.9 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I am grateful for the Minister's response on that. He did mention transfers, and one of the issues that I have, also picked up from constituents, is that they are living in inappropriate accommodation for their needs and have themselves identified an alternative where the transfer could happen. Could he perhaps look at why the barriers to internal transfer are still a problem for residents occupying properties that are not meeting their needs?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

It is something that I do hear about regularly, where someone knows of a property that is coming up. Of course, what people do not know is who is next on the Gateway, how much work that property needs to be carried out in between the new tenants taking possession of it. So the problems are multifaceted and they are perhaps not as easy as they appear on the outside, but absolutely, I will keep that under review, and if we need to make changes, then I absolutely will.

4.9 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Economic Development regarding industries he wishes to attract to Jersey. (OQ.107/2026)

Will the Minister advise what specific industries he wishes to attract to Jersey and explain what steps he will take during this term to attract them?

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

I do not believe it is for Ministers to pick and choose winners in our economy. The role of Government is to create the right environment for businesses to thrive so that they can create secure, well-paid jobs. We will do that by reducing bureaucracy, where possible, and by encouraging companies to improve their productivity. By its nature, Jersey attracts high value, low footprint businesses and Locate Jersey and other agencies continue to focus on attracting and supporting their arrival into the Island, but new sectors naturally take longer to become productive and provide a meaningful contribution to the economy.

[11:00]

We need to support what is already here. I intend to continue to support the Minister for External Relations with his excellent work in financial services, and we will ensure that the best possible conditions are in place for the wider economy to contribute to and benefit from the *Time to Win* programme. I would regard new sectors as the icing on what is already a very good cake.

4.9.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Two medical cannabis licences were granted before Jersey had regulations for this industry in place, and in 2022 Scrutiny found it was not even clear who the Minister was responsible. Could the Minister name specific lessons his department has learned from this and what work is he doing to embed these lessons?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

It is the Minister for Health and Social Services who is in charge of the regulation for these areas. We understand that our regulation is not quite up to scratch. There is an issue over how the industry is being regulated and, more importantly, the sort of prescriptions that are being given to Islanders. This is an area of concern and it is certainly an area of concern for the Minister for Health and Social Services.

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

I was quite surprised to hear the Minister say he did not think it was for him to target specific industries. I wonder if he could put that in the context of Government supporting "Bergerac" and wanting to support an emerging film industry, for example. Does he think that we should not be doing things like that?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think that there are 2 different issues there. The initiative to support "Bergerac" was largely done to support the tourism sector and also promote the Island generally. Indeed, that has been very successful. One in 4 visitors to the Island have seen "Bergerac" and have been encouraged to visit Jersey as a result. The other issue is the film sector, and that is a sector that we are looking at. Indeed, there are a number of areas. There is a biopharmaceutical area that we have spoken to, and I must give credit to Deputy Romeril, the Assistant Minister for Economic Development, who is doing a sterling job and spending a great deal of time talking to people who are interested in coming to Jersey. Very often these businesses do involve new industry sectors. There are also specialist engineering businesses that are interested in coming to Jersey. It is a question of meeting these people, discussing what the issues are, whether they can come to Jersey quickly, and if they cannot, then what is the barrier to that. So as far as the film sector is concerned, this is something that is of interest. I was at a presentation only yesterday on the film sector, and we are going to be looking closely at it. If we are able to support this sector, then of course we will need some financing in the 2028 Budget. The one thing that we have learnt, talking to film producers and programme producers, is that they go where the money is, so if Jersey wants to attract these productions, then I am afraid we need to provide some sort of funding to go with that.

4.9.3 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

It is my view that a strong and sustainable economy needs to be a diverse economy. Again, going back to the Minister's comments that he did not think that it was his role to support specific industries, how will he then ensure that we do have a sustainable and diverse economy?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I did not say that I would not support particular industries, but what I do not want to do - and what my Assistant Ministers do not want to do - is to try to pick the winners of the future. I am afraid Jersey has made that mistake in the past and it has cost us dearly. It is a question of having an open door and discussing with potential businesses what their needs are and whether we can accommodate them. It probably is a question of looking at individual businesses and then seeing if other similar businesses can locate to Jersey. As far as having a diverse industry sector is concerned, I entirely agree. We do need to diversify our economy, if possible, but we need to do that in a way that generates additional tax revenues and improves the standard of living for people in Jersey. That is why, coming back to the film sector, that is of interest because of course at yesterday's presentation there were a large number of Highlands College students, and of course we have a very good media section at Highlands, so a lot of those students were coming from there. I am sure that they would appreciate the opportunity of finding employment in this sector in Jersey.

4.9.4 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I am pleased to hear the Minister's enthusiasm for a new film industry, and indeed I was pleased to hear about yesterday's event, which I was unable to attend. I know that the current Minister for

Treasury and Resources will no doubt also be fascinated by the attempts to make a new film industry. He will be impressed, like me, about the Minister's "can be done" attitude, and it proves that nothing is Impossingworth for he who believes; I do not expect the reference to be got by everybody. But would the Minister answer the question about whether he thinks, like me, that it was a bit of a contrived way to fund a film - "Bergerac", for example - by giving the money to Visit Jersey and effectively asking them to fund the film rather than giving the money directly? What was the reason for this?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I believe that the original decision was made before my appointment, and I understand that the series 3 has largely been funded by royalties from series 1 and 2. So all I am doing really is continue what seems to be a successful formula of the past, put in place by my predecessor, and I think he did an excellent job there, thank you. So really it is a question of placing the money where it can be best used. Visit Jersey have used some of their existing budget to complement the additional funds that have been provided by the department.

4.9.5 Deputy M. Tadier:

I am still trying to understand the logic that the Minister is perpetuating this bizarre and contrived funding mechanism. Does it mean, for example, that Visit Jersey will be getting the royalties that would be due back to Jersey's initial investment? Would it not be simply straightforward for Government to decide whether they want to fund this? Is the reason because Government - after Senator Maclean, when he got his fingers burnt perhaps 11 years ago - have little appetite for risk? Is he satisfied that that looks okay on paper and it is doing its job?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, it is working. The Deputy is correct to raise the issue of who gets the royalties. The royalties do go back to Visit Jersey, and those royalties are being applied to fund future series, and every series improves the chance of the programme being sold to more jurisdictions because the more series there are, the more attractive it is to networks to buy the series - or the series of series - and it fills slots in their programming. Can I just refer to the States previous experience with funding film? We need to take those lessons that have been learnt and apply them to how we go forward. I think there are valuable lessons to be learnt.

4.9.6 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think the answer to my follow-up question shows how complicated the system is around medical cannabis, because I was talking about the growing of medical cannabis. The Minister will find that the former Minister for Economic Development, who is now the Chief Minister, was attracting the industry to come to Jersey. I am glad that he recognises that there was not the regulatory framework in place and now we are trying to sort it out, but for the residents in my district, who have lived with the noise and smell from a cannabis farm for many years - and the States of Jersey Complaints Panel have upheld a complaint about how it was handled - what assurance can the Minister for Economic Development give them and Islanders that any future new industry will be handled differently, and that would be coming from his department or at least advising other Ministers how to set up a proper framework to ensure we do not have the same issues again?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, it is important that we do have the right regulatory framework. Indeed, we have already spoken to another biopharmaceutical player in that market, and we have already flagged up some potential problems with what they want to do in Jersey. It is true that we need to take a balanced view as to any potential impacts on residents living around a particular manufacturing plant. I think there are also issues around having to work with, in this case, the cannabis growers to make sure that they mitigate any smells and noise emanating from their production units.

4.10 Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Planning and Regulation regarding identified hazards. (OQ.112/2026)

Further to his response to Written Question 229/2026, will the Minister advise how many of the 315 hazards had been verified as resolved when the Minister stated to the media that all identified hazards had been dealt with, and what evidence supported that statement?

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat (The Minister for Planning and Regulation):

I regret that I cannot give the exact number that the Member has asked for because the inspection system is not set up to provide that information midway through the process. The agricultural accommodation inspection project started this summer. As part of our standard inspection process, landlords are given appropriate time to address any hazards identified during inspections. Some of the hazards identified have been straightforward to remedy, such as working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors and threadbare carpets, which could be a slip hazard. Others have been more significant, for example, unsafe heating systems, unsafe electrical installations, the adequacy of treatment systems serving private water supplies and excess cold. At the time of my media interview, 295 units of accommodation had been inspected. In all, 315 identified hazards were being addressed through regulatory intervention, with officers notifying landlords of the hazards present and the actions required to remedy them. The verification arrangements will range from accepting assurances, scene photographs, scene documentary evidence and inspections. I should add that the response of the farming industry has been excellent and I would expect nothing less from Jersey farmers. They have been keen to understand any problems that have been identified and what is needed to address them. I am pleased to say it has not been necessary to issue any formal notices.

4.10.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Now that the Minister had admitted that some significant hazards remain, how can he possibly assure the Assembly that our agricultural workers are living in safe accommodation?

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

That is a very good question. During the inspections process, as I have said, it was not necessary to issue any notice, which would have been done without hesitation if there was a significant risk to the health of the occupants. The inspection process takes time and we will know within a few months what work has been done. Following the last meeting of the Assembly, I felt I needed much more information about this, and accordingly I asked officers to scope a report, which will be done by the end of the year, outlining how the inspection process has worked, what has been found and the work that has been done, but it is reasonable to be proportionate when asking farmers to undertake work. For example, where there is an inadequate heating system, it cannot simply be fixed overnight and sometimes it may take a little time. Some of this accommodation is not occupied in the winter months. It is really important that we are proportionate with farmers who, without exception, are trying to do their best to provide good accommodation for the farm workers, as they have done for many years. So can I provide the assurance that every single hazard has been identified and fixed? No, I cannot - that would be unrealistic - but what I can assure this Assembly is that the inspection process is going well; it is thorough. The farmers have been very responsive and the issues that have been identified will be dealt with in an appropriate period of time, and I will report back to the Assembly how that has been done.

The Bailiff:

Questions from Deputy Jeune and Deputy Wilson only and then final supplementary from Deputy Feltham.

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

I thank the Minister for his comprehensive answers so far, but could he say of the 315 hazards that were found how many were category 1, so the most serious level?

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

The system, as I understand it, simply identifies hazards. I think, looking forward, it would be really helpful to identify hazards in different categories from those which we might find in some cases in our own houses to those that are moderately important, to those that are so serious we would need to issue a notice. The system does not do that at present. It does not do it in other areas either, but I think that is a really good point.

[11:15]

When we review this - and it is really important we do a thorough review after the first series of inspections - we will absolutely look at how the system can be made better, not just for this type of inspection, but for others as well.

4.10.3 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Yes, and I thank the Minister for that acknowledgement of the need particularly to understand the seriousness and the categorisation, because it is always a worry to see 315 hazards, but we do not know in what category or level of risk. I suppose my question to maybe go to the Minister: he compared those hazards to those in people's own homes when he was interviewed on this the first time by the media, but when someone lives in accommodation provided by their employer or landlord, the law puts the duty on the landlord, not on the occupant, so does he accept these hazards should be judged against that legal standard, not against what a homeowner might put up with? Maybe he could revisit his comments that he made in the media.

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

I absolutely accept what the Member has said. Where somebody is providing accommodation for a third party, then it must meet different standards from what people are prepared to accept in their own home. The point I was trying to make - clearly not very well - was that some of the hazards are relatively minor and are quite easy to address. I take the threadbare carpet that is a slip hazard or the fact that there is a smoke alarm or a carbon monoxide alarm that does not work. It is absolutely vital that the people providing the accommodation take responsibility for ensuring that that is done, so I would not in any way minimise the importance of that being done. Those who are landlords have greater responsibilities. We may be willing to live with unsafe things in our own houses, but we should not be willing to provide housing accommodation for others without meeting all legal requirements.

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

Could the Minister confirm whether or not he has visited any of the premises that are under inspection? If so, was there any particular concern that he wanted to take forward on a personal level that he felt would provide some comfort to those living in those conditions that he was listening to the concerns that they had about their living standards?

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

No, I have not done so. I have to say, I spend as much time as I can talking with people in a range of areas where I have an interest, and that is one I have not been able to. I was able to talk to the officers doing the inspections directly, and I am really keen that we not only have data about what has been done, but sometimes the knowledge that officers gain through their inspection work is invaluable. We need to capture that and to document it. Some of what I have been able to say today is because I have talked with the officers directly doing the inspections, and I will ensure that when we produce our report it is not just bare numbers, but it does also obtain some qualitative assessments of the attitudes of the farmers - which, as I have said, has been excellent - and what our own officers

have found. They have not found resistance; on the contrary, their inspections have been welcomed. As I have said before, this is exactly what we would expect from our farming community, who have been providing accommodation to workers for a long time. Those workers often come back year after year, but of course standards change, and the standards have changed. The farmers have to meet them and they know that, and I am satisfied that they are doing it.

4.10.5 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I just wonder, there is something different about what we are told and what we see, and I understand that the co-operation and the support on both sides, both for the farmers and also the residents, seems to be working well, but can he give us an assurance that he will triangulate that evidence and at least be seen to be visiting some of these premises to make sure that he is satisfied that what he is being told is happening?

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

No one is keener than me in this Assembly to work with evidence and to triangulate as much as I can. I will talk with officers about whether it would be appropriate for me to do some of these visits. I cannot say that it would be or not. Some people might be alarmed by a Minister inspecting accommodation, but I would be keen to do so and I will discuss that with officers and see if something can be arranged. Thank you for the suggestion.

4.10.6 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Would the Minister agree with me that he has a key role in ensuring that vulnerable migrant workers are kept safe, and will he give the Assembly assurance that he and his department are sharing adequate information with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs so that when they are taking decisions on work permits, they are doing it with full knowledge of where migrant workers may be expected to be living in unsafe accommodation?

Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

Absolutely, on the first point. I will discuss with my Minister to ensure that we are adequately sharing information. There are different responsibilities. The Minister is responsible for the issue of work permits, my department is responsible for inspecting accommodation, but we must of course be joined up in this, as we are in all other areas, so I will arrange to ... well, I will ensure that that discussion takes place. I am satisfied that officers already have those discussions, but I will personally check to ensure that those discussions are adequate and that we are sharing information as we should be.

4.11 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity of the Minister for Economic Development regarding employment protections.

Further to the Minister's interview with BBC Jersey on 5th November where he stated that workers' rights should take second place to economic growth, will he advise which existing employment protections he considers would impede economic growth and whether he considers these should be repealed or amended, and state whether he would oppose any protections common in other similar jurisdictions being introduced in Jersey?

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

I am grateful to the Deputy for her question, because it allows me to clarify my remarks which were reported by the local media last week. I want to make it clear that I did not say that existing employment rights should be reduced or repealed, and I do not believe economic growth should ever come at the expense of workers' rights. Employees in Jersey enjoy a good range of fundamental protections and I have not and am not proposing a reduction in those existing workers' rights. A strong economy should provide good, secure employment, fair treatment and opportunities for people to progress. Workers' rights have a vital part to play in that. My comments at I.o.D. (Institute of

Directors) relate to the lack of growth that Jersey has experienced in recent years and how the Government needs to find the right balance when they consider adding new regulations. Our aim should be to create the conditions in which businesses can grow, while ensuring workers are properly protected and treated fairly. I would also like to take this opportunity to say that economic growth should lead to a higher standard of living for everyone in Jersey, something I believe we are all striving to achieve.

4.11.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Minister for his answer. I want to then test 2 examples. This Assembly agreed in 2023 to protect whistleblowers and a draft law already exists. Many Islanders have no workplace pension and the Government have only just begun potentially work on this law. Will the Minister support both of these being brought forward in this term, or does he see them as a cost to growth?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think, as with all of these things, they need to be looked at in the whole. This is also a hypothetical question because at the moment there is no proposal to introduce workplace pensions, although there is the draft law for whistleblowing, but that is an enhancement on the existing rights for protection for unfair dismissal.

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

Looking positively, does the Minister see other protections - to the Deputy's original question - that other jurisdictions have that might work hand in hand with providing both rights to employees and benefits to employers? Has he given thought to the example in the U.K. being discussed right now, which is more transparency about publishing pay scales for jobs?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, I am certainly open to these suggestions. I think the important thing is that if we are going to achieve a balance, then we need to consider the benefit to the employees against any potential downside to employment. I think that we must remember that our economy contracted last year by 1.7 per cent, and the year before it contracted by 0.8 per cent, so that is 2 years of contraction in our economy. We are doing our people of Jersey and our workers a disservice if we are not focused very much on growing our economy.

4.11.3 Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Just focusing on the latter example I gave on publishing of pay scales, the Minister said there is a balance between employee benefits and employer costs, and that may be financial or not. Is he aware of any specific costs or disbenefits that introducing similar proposed legislation on pay scales would bring to employers that would make them less performant in their industries?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

On the surface, if it is just providing information on gender pay scales, I see no problem with that, but we need to look at these things carefully, because very often when regulations are introduced there are the unforeseen disbenefits that come out of the woodwork when these regulations are put in place.

4.11.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Earlier the Minister spoke about attracting new industry and laying the groundwork for that. Could he give the Assembly an assurance that Jersey will not compete for business by offering weaker protections for workers going forward?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I can certainly agree to that. I cannot see any situation where we would want to encourage an industry sector by reducing laws that would cut right the way across the economy.

4.12 Deputy S.J. Gleave of St. Helier South of the Chief Minister regarding the Common Strategic Policy. (OQ.122/2026)

Will the Chief Minister clarify how the Council of Ministers intends the Common Strategic Policy to guide Government decisions over the next 4 years, and whether it will operate as a flexible framework that allows Ministers and States Members to bring forward new initiatives and priorities not specifically included within the C.S.P. (Common Strategic Policy)?

Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister):

The Common Strategic Policy sets the Council of Ministers' strategic priorities for its term of office. Naturally it does not and cannot cover everything Government does. Essential services and Ministers' wider responsibilities continue alongside those C.S.P. priorities. Once agreed - if agreed - by the States Assembly, the Government will use the C.S.P. to guide our work and decisions over the next 4 years by delivering the actions we have committed to on considering proposals and spending decisions against those agreed priorities. But I want to emphasise that the C.S.P. is not a fixed 4-year programme or an exhaustive list of everything the Government or indeed the States Assembly will wish to do. Ministers will continue to lead their wider portfolios, and if new challenges or opportunities arise, we will respond to them. Equally, we welcome States Members' contributions, who can continue to bring forward new initiatives. The C.S.P. gives us a clear direction and focus, but it does not prevent us from adapting as or if circumstances change. The C.S.P. matters, because it sets the strategic priorities that Ministers are committed to pursue, against which we are held accountable, and those are the priorities we will aim to get delivered in our 4-year term.

4.12.1 Deputy S.J. Gleave:

I welcome that reassurance, Chief Minister. Given the relatively short time available to develop the C.S.P. and the decision to allow more time to develop the Government's longer-term budget, does the Chief Minister agree that the C.S.P. is ... you already have agreed that it is not an exhaustive list, so in that case, what genuine scope will there be for new priorities to engage for the Back-Benchers as work is progressed?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I think one of the strengths of this Assembly, one of its unique circumstances, allows for all Members to bring propositions to the Assembly. As I said before, Ministers and the Government as a whole will always welcome new initiatives brought by Back-Benchers. We are open to discussions. We might not always agree, but where there is clearly a good idea that will benefit Jersey, we would be pleased to take that further. I think it is worth stressing though that the C.S.P. is a 4-year plan, and in this instance it sets clear deliverable priorities that can be tracked. But just to go back to the question, we will always welcome - and this Assembly will always welcome and be pleased to debate - any new initiatives.

The Bailiff:

Running a bit short of time, so questions from Deputy Alex Curtis and Deputy Jeune only.

[11:30]

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

The Chief Minister has said that the inclusion or no inclusion of things in the C.S.P. does not preclude further work or new initiatives, and given the conversation on assisted purchase schemes today, showing that the choice of schemes is still in their early development, will the Minister advise why the Council of Ministers is choosing not to accept the E.H.I. (Environment, Housing and

Infrastructure) Scrutiny Panel's amendment to remove assisted purchase schemes from the description, in which the comments say the Minister for Housing wishes to retain the ability to pursue assisted purchase schemes? Does he not agree that in his description of the C.S.P. it would retain that flexibility, even with the wording removed?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Yes, and that works both ways. As we will discuss in the debate on the first amendment to the C.S.P., I will explain in more detail why that is important.

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

If the C.S.P. is a guide for how decisions will be made for the next 4 years, even though we seem to be able to add in through the 4 years more, does he think a one-hour briefing and a 90-minute workshop was enough involvement for non-Executive members to add to the document before the document was approved? Does he feel that this process is the right process to go through to make an Assembly document?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

First of all, the C.S.P. is not a guide, it is a policy document that lists down items that we expect to be delivered tangibly and that delivery and success will be tracked. Our workshop, or 2-hour workshop, and the interaction we have had may or may not be enough as far as Members are concerned; I think we had less than a third of the Assembly attend. What I do think is enough is a 12-week lodging period and the extensive Scrutiny process we go through, which I think allows Members adequate time to scrutinise and look closely at our plan and the willingness and engagement of both Members and Ministers in relation to discussing and agreeing or not the amendments, the very good amendments that have been presented.

4.12.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I was wondering if the Chief Minister has discussed with his counterparts in the Isle of Man how they develop their plan. Because, for example, they go through a debate on the first draft so that the Council of Ministers and the Assembly as a whole can talk about the content before there is then a final decision where the final plan is put forward or priorities are put forward. Is that something that has been discussed in the Council of Ministers; also is it something that he has talked about with others and with his counterparts in other jurisdictions and Crown Dependencies?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

No, I have not discussed that with colleagues in the Isle of Man. The Council of Ministers is always open to looking how we may be able to improve things. I think that the way we have it now has worked and still works, otherwise we can get too tied up with unnecessary debate, and too much focus on process rather than action.

4.12.5 Deputy S.J. Gleave:

Again, I welcome the reassurance from the Chief Minister that he is open to genuine flexibility within the C.S.P.s. I note that Back-Benchers can bring their own propositions but of course we all know the reality of that is that, without C.O.M. (Council of Ministers) support, they do not have much chance of going through. I understand that some departments within Government are discouraged from considering initiatives outside the C.S.P. Given that the Back-Benchers' workshop referenced by Deputy Jeune resulted in no changes to the C.S.P. and happened after it had been published and decided, can the Chief Minister explain how he will ensure that both government departments and future workshops remain genuinely open to new priorities and proposals?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I believe all government departments and Ministers are open to new proposals. I have not heard of any circumstances where they are not. I know the current team of Ministers have their own minds and will make those decisions for themselves, whether we take things forward or not. The challenge of course comes with resources. Because we have a finite amount of resources, we have to balance our books. There are a lot of things that are desirable, and perhaps we have to focus on the things that are essential first, but the door is always open. Ultimately it is for the bringer of any proposition, whether it be a Government Minister or a Back-Bencher, to persuade this Assembly that it is the right thing to do.

4.13 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding the reasoning behind the decision of the Council of Ministers not to reinstate the full States Grant to the Social Security Fund before 2030. (OQ.105/2026)

Will the Minister explain the reasoning behind the decision of the Council of Ministers not to reinstate the full States Grant to the Social Security Fund before 2030?

Senator A.J.H.M. Maclean (The Minister for Treasury and Resources):

Let me again emphasise the Council of Ministers' commitment to ensuring that our Social Security Fund is properly funded and sustainable for the long term. The States Grant was temporarily reduced by the previous Council of Ministers and States Assembly to support investment in healthcare, Children's Services and support Islanders in Budget 2026. As I explained to the Assembly in September, that reduction was temporary. Through Budget 2027, we have confirmed the commitment to restoring the States Grant by 2030. The decision not to bring this reinstatement forward in full reflects the need to take an informed, responsible decision about what is affordable and deliverable in the short term. Reviews are currently underway and expected to report in quarter one, 2027. These will provide updated long-term projections of the fund's sustainability and consider the appropriate balance between contributions, States funding and reserves. It would therefore be premature to make firm commitments on an earlier timing before all the evidence is available. Accordingly, Budget 2027 retains the existing timetable agreed by the previous Assembly. However, if evidence and the wider public finance position supports an earlier restoration of the grant, that is something I would be keen to pursue.

4.14 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Minister for Children and Families regarding exploitation and grooming of children in Jersey. (OQ.115/2026)

Further to Written Question 145/2026, will the Minister advise what progress, if any, has been made regarding understanding and addressing the issue of children in Jersey being exposed to exploitation and grooming?

Connétable R.P. Vibert of St. Peter (The Minister for Children and Families):

I thank the Deputy for the question. The original question of course had 5 sub-sections, so there was quite a lengthy answer to that, but I will try to keep this brief. While no new formal measures have been introduced since the previous update in July, work has been undertaken across the partnership to increase awareness and understanding of R.O.T.H. (Risk Outside the Home) and strengthen the multi-agency response to extrafamilial harm. Between 14th October and 16th October colleagues from Southampton City Council visited Jersey to engage with key partner agencies and share learning on R.O.T.H. Southampton is seen as, in effect, almost the gold standard in the U.K. in dealing with this area. The visit provided a valuable opportunity to enhance awareness and understand multi-agency collaboration. Discussions focused on early intervention, missing children, assessment and planning, processing, disruption activity and the development of diversionary approaches to reduce vulnerability and improve outcomes for children. Since the visit there has been a noticeable strengthening of partnership working across our agencies - and this is very positive - and an improved awareness of the understanding of R.O.T.H. As I said, this is a positive foundation for a new pathway

to be developed in Jersey. As of 31st October 2026, 69 children were receiving some level of support from Children's Services in relation to exploitation risks. In July the figure was 63. I stress that the number varies and therefore we should not draw any conclusions from that increase. There are no changes to where responsibility lies for the co-ordination of services for at-risk children when multiple agencies, including schools, are involved since my previous answer in July, and I am satisfied with those arrangements. Answer to (d) in the previous question, mechanisms in the …

The Bailiff:

I think (d) is gone and your answer has now got to 2 minutes, Minister. Thank you very much. A supplementary, Deputy Wilson?

4.14.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Does the Minister, based on what he has just said, now have a sufficiently accurate picture of the scale and nature of child grooming and exploitation in Jersey, including sexual and criminal exploitation? What gaps remain, in his understanding?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

I think when we look at exploitation and safeguarding we have to consider that it is constantly moving. While today we recognise the issues that surround us, new safeguarding areas become apparent. It is something where we cannot rest on our laurels and we have to keep working on this constantly and updating it. I am satisfied where we are at the moment. I believe there is work to be done but, as I say, it is a constantly moving and very complex area. I thank the Deputy for the question.

The Bailiff:

I have a question now from Deputy Tadier and then a final supplementary from Deputy Wilson, as there are a number of questions still to get through and time is getting shorter.

4.14.2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I think the question is timely and my question is to the Minister. Given that there will clearly be an overlap here from the good work and the necessary work which is going on with the V.A.W.G. (Violence Against Women and Girls) project, would he emphasise the fact that there is a potential risk that violence and sexual exploitation of boys could be forgotten and that we need to be, and society needs to be, vigilant to that possibility? Also to make sure that in the messaging that goes out, perhaps even consider the message should be preventing violence against women and children.

The Connétable of St. Peter:

Of course we do recognise that area and it is one where certainly there have been cases in the past. It is not an area that is ignored. We can think about perhaps a change in the title, but I do not think that diminishes from the fact that we already have that area adequately covered at present.

4.14.3 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Would the Minister agree that the Assembly might need some stronger independent assurance that the arrangements that he has just outlined and described are effective in identifying victims, disrupting the perpetrators and preventing further exploitation? Would he consider commissioning such a review of that kind?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

I think I have been asked this question before about a review. I do not consider that necessary at this time. The service is regularly inspected, including this area, and we take note of the recommendations from those independent inspections. I feel that certainly the timing, that level of scrutiny is sufficient.

4.15 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding the rehabilitation of offenders. (OQ.120/2026)

Will the Minister advise what level of importance she places on the rehabilitation of offenders, and will she give an assurance in this area that it will be sufficiently and sustainably resourced?

Senator H.M. Miles (The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs):

I thank the Deputy for the question. I place very high importance on the rehabilitation of offenders, both in prison and the community. Rehabilitation is essential if we are to reduce reoffending, protect the public and help individuals lead law-abiding and productive lives following their conviction. The work undertaken by both the States of Jersey Prison Service and the Jersey Probation and After-Care Service is critical to achieving those outcomes. I can assure all Members that rehabilitation remains a key priority, and I will continue to advocate for the resources necessary to support effective offender rehabilitation and reduce reoffending in Jersey.

[11:45]

4.15.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

Part of the reason for asking this question is that I am mindful that her predecessor talked about the fact that there could be up to 300 new offences being committed by the second year of some of the new legislation we have put in around offences to the persons. That means more people in prison and they will need to be rehabilitated as part of that process. Can the Minister give an assurance that well into the future, and indeed in this forthcoming Budget, there will be sufficient resources being put in, not just to house any new custodial sentences but to look at and monitor them in the longer term, and whether this involves any new acquisition of staff?

Senator H.M. Miles:

I thank the Deputy for the opportunity to clarify that the model that has been put in place to fund the outcome of the new offences created by the V.A.W.G. legislation, is demand-led and there will be sufficient resources for agencies to access over and above what has originally been identified in order for them to meet these demands. One of the pieces of work that I am doing is around our criminal justice strategy and around sentencing policy. It does not necessarily follow that we will see a rise in the prison population. We have an excellent Probation and After-Care Service, and they have the confidence of the court. We already know that they have a 75 per cent success rate in the outcomes of the community penalties. This is a complex area; it does not necessarily mean that everybody will be put into prison. The other area that I am bringing in next year is going to be the post-custodial supervision legislation. That will not be brought in until we know that it is appropriately resourced. The Probation and After-Care Service have already been awarded 2 full-time posts in order to manage the demands that that will place upon that particular service.

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

The Minister mentioned at the end of her answer about the post-custodial supervision law she will bring in. Just to check for the record that this relates to ensuring the introduction of mandatory probation and mandatory support for post-custodial supervision. If the Minister can confirm that and how will she ensure that there will be sufficient resources to support such mandatory support?

Senator H.M. Miles:

The post-custodial supervision law has been a long time in the making and a great deal of work has been done to understand what the resource capacity will be. As I said in my answer to Deputy Tadier, that funding has been put in place in the Budget. The Probation Service are due to receive funding for up to 2 probation officers who will manage the case load of post-custodial supervision, which will be compulsory supervision until the end of sentence.

4.15.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

I just ask for clarification. The Minister referred to a 75 per cent success rate; I think that was referring to the non-custodial route which, if one was being critical from the other side could say it is a 25 per cent failure rate. Would the Minister explain what she sees as a good benchmark or what are the benchmarks for success in this area? What would she be doing to try and improve that, particularly in this area?

Senator H.M. Miles:

A 75 per cent completion rate for community sentences is considered to be a very good outcome and significantly higher than you would find in England, Wales and Scotland. Rehabilitation is not an exact science, it is a process. When you are dealing with very high-risk offenders, it is highly likely that they will go on to reoffend. Whereas I would love some Utopian situation of no crime, and I could talk about this for hours, we will never achieve 100 per cent. I am very satisfied that 75 per cent is a very satisfactory level.

4.16 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée of St. Helier South of the Minister for Economic Development regarding the performance of the DFDS ferry service. (OQ.110/2026)

Will the Minister provide an update on the performance of the DFDS ferry service since it began operating in Jersey, assessed against the indicators of the ferry concession agreement, and please provide the number of cancellations over the past 6-month period, and that provision is in comparison against the performance of the previous service provider?

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

Between March 2025, when DFDS began operating Jersey's services, and October 2026, the company operated 3,889 services, 97 per cent of which were on time or had minimal delays. Over that period, 266 scheduled sailings were cancelled because of the weather and 94 because of technical or operational issues. Where cancellations occurred, DFDS ran 124 replacement sailings. I would like to point out to the Deputy and all Members to the Government's open data site on which DFDS's operational performance reports are published every quarter. Looking specifically at the last 6 months, DFDS scheduled 1,404 sailings but did not operate 103 of those; 61 because of *force majeure* events or those outside of the operator's control, and 42 for reasons which could be attributed to the operator. However, DFDS put on an additional 52 sailings over that period. In the equivalent 6 months in 2024, Condor Ferries reported 29 cancellations across its combined Jersey and Guernsey network, comprising one fault and 28 no-fault events.

4.16.1 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

What assessment has the Minister made of the impact of DFDS performance on tourism visitors numbers and the tourism confidence?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Well the figures speak for themselves. In the first year of operation, sea arrivals were down by about 15 per cent, if my memory serves me correctly, and this year we are maintaining the same number of arrivals as last year. Of course, there will be a reduction in overall numbers against the previous operator simply because, as Members will know, there is no Jersey/Guernsey interconnection. Also, passengers that were wanting to sail from St. Malo to Guernsey would also sail on the old Condor vessel.

4.16.2 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I understand that there is a policy in place, that may be a legal requirement for DFDS, that if there is a sailing which is delayed, for example, of over 120 minutes, you can claim back 50 per cent. I know this because I did that with travelling. Can I ask the Minister why this is not publicised more?

Because anyone who is on a sailing of such where one person can claim that compensation, every booking can claim that compensation. Is it something that the Minister feels he could do more as a department to publicise in terms of people's consumer rights, especially given the monopoly situation that DFDS enjoys in Jersey? If not him, would he take this issue up both with DFDS and the Consumer Council to inform people of their rights?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, I think we can certainly take this up with the Consumer Council and also DFDS. I think it is an important point that if passengers are entitled to a refund of some sort, then they should be aware of their right.

4.16.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

Indeed, I think it would be a good way to make sure there is more money in people's pockets that they can spend in the economy. Would the Minister go one step further and make a requirement that DFDS should inform all passengers of their rights who have been booked on that? So rather than them having to apply for the compensation, they can be more proactive in making recompense for the loss that the passengers have experienced.

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I am all for putting money into people's pockets. The other thing is of course we do need DFDS to be profitable so they can afford to buy new vessels. I will certainly give the Deputy an undertaking to look into this more closely and make sure that adequate information is provided to customers.

4.16.4 Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée:

Following the Minister's recent reply, will the Minister consider undertaking an assessment of the impact that cancellations and delays may affect the Jersey economy, particularly the hospitality retail and agricultural sectors?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

I think the issue is that the majority of cancellations are as a result of bad weather. For example, one of the vessels had a fire on board and that severely interrupted the service provided. What I would say in DFDS's defence is that they have put on a considerable number of additional sailings. While it is unfortunate that passengers get disrupted, I think that DFDS have done a reasonable job in making sure that our freight, especially our food, gets to Jersey. I believe that they should be given a pat on the back for making sure that our supermarkets were full of food after the recent storms. However, I will undertake to certainly make sure that customers are availed with the information to claim a refund. I can talk to my officers about doing an assessment, but these cancellations and delays are not voluntary, they happen for a good reason. Sometimes there are technical problems; the majority is it is wind.

4.17 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Housing regarding the Homelessness Cluster. (OQ.119/2026)

Following the Minister's statement to the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel on 22nd October 2026, that he would attend the next Homelessness Cluster meeting, will the Minister state if that meeting has taken place; and advise what actions, Ministerial responsibilities and delivery dates have been agreed to prevent and reduce homelessness?

Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour (The Minister for Housing):

I thank the Deputy for the question. The next meeting of the Homelessness Cluster is scheduled to take place this week, and I look forward to participating in that discussion. As this meeting has not yet taken place, no specific new actions have been agreed at this stage; this will happen on Friday. It is important to recognise that the cluster is a partnership of organisations involved in preventing and

addressing homelessness, including government services, social housing providers and specialist support agencies. Preventing and reducing homelessness is therefore a shared responsibility. The quarterly homelessness report demonstrates both the pressures facing services and the important work being undertaken to support Islanders experiencing homelessness. They also show positive outcomes, with more than 40 people supported into long-term secure housing during the second quarter of 2026. My focus will be on working with Cluster members to strengthen prevention activity and ensure efficient pathways out of homelessness are there for those who require that support.

4.17.1 Deputy C.S. Alves:

As the Minister knows, I was Assistant Minister to the Minister for Housing in the last couple of years. I would like to ask the Minister if he is going to continue with the Homelessness Ministerial Group that was originally started by Deputy Labey and continued with Deputy Mézec in the last couple of years.

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

No, I have no plans to continue with the Homelessness Ministerial Group. I see my focus as being on working with the partners who support homeless people. I have already set up meetings with the providers, and that is how I plan to get underneath the issues and to support those organisations in any way that I can.

4.17.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

The previous Minister for Housing called homelessness legislation premature and wanted a phased approach. Does the Minister agree with that position or not, and why?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I think I have got quite a lot of history on this because in my previous role I was involved in the very first Homelessness Cluster. It was felt that legislation in itself is not necessarily the answer. We have got really good support mechanisms in Jersey. We have got really good organisations who want to work together to support people to make sure they do not become homeless. We see from the last quarterly reports that the figures have dropped slightly, which is encouraging. My view at this present moment in time is that I will not be bringing forward legislation.

[12:00]

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

Without legal duty, what guarantees that an Islander who becomes homeless gets help? I will add, does the Minister not agree that, as homelessness is multi-faceted, should he not be working closely with other Ministers to ensure there is prevention rather than putting all the emphasis on charities to be helping Islanders to ensure they are not homeless?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

What we do have is a definition of homelessness and by defining it, that at least gets us to understand the scope of the problem. Part of what we do around Council of Ministers is look at that in the round. I do not see a need at the moment to reinvigorate the group that was set up before. I think the work is best done by myself and the team working with the providers.

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

In the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel, the Minister acknowledged that homelessness in men is caused primarily by substance use and then women by domestic abuse. Both of these items are covered by different Ministerial portfolios. Is it then not better to have a Ministerial steering group on homelessness?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

As Ministers, we speak to each other. We raise concerns with each other, we work together. There are identified problems which we work together in the round to solve.

4.17.5 Deputy T.A. Coles:

If the Ministers work together having a co-ordinated meeting around a particular topic minuted so the public can understand what discussions had been held, would there not be a steering group?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I still see the Cluster as being my main focus. and that is the way I intend to take this work forward.

4.17.6 Deputy C.S. Alves:

It is really disappointing to hear that the Minister will not be putting that Ministerial group back together again, which did include stakeholders as well. The Minister mentioned that it was a shared responsibility among everybody. Can the Minister advise on what basis did he make this decision? Has he spoken to stakeholders and the other Ministers involved before taking this decision?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I am continuing to speak to stakeholders. As I have expressed earlier, I have that Cluster meeting this week. That is one of the things that I shall put to that Cluster meeting and the wider stakeholders to garner their opinion on the matter.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Can I just clarify something there, Sir?

The Bailiff:

Yes.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Does that mean the final decision has not been made then; the Minister is taking up?

Deputy M.R. Ferey:

I have decided to not reinvigorate that Ministerial group. If the Cluster members and the providers have a different view, then I will reassess that decision.

4.18 Deputy L.D. Carpenter of St. Helier Central of the Minister for Housing regarding assessments of homes currently advertised for sale. (OQ.117/2026)

Will the Minister advise what assessment, if any, has been undertaken regarding the number of homes currently advertised for sale, the length of time they take to sell and the reasons some remain unsold and explain how any such assessment has informed his priority of building more homes and improving affordability?

Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour (The Minister for Housing):

I thank the Deputy for the question. I have not commissioned any specific assessments of the numbers of homes currently advertised for sale, the length of time they take to sell or the reasons individual properties remain unsold. The housing market is dynamic and influenced by a wide range of factors, including property type, location, condition, asking price and wider economic conditions. It is, therefore, difficult to draw broad conclusions from the circumstances of individual properties or to identify a single reason why a particular home may remain on the market for a period of time. In informing the development of housing policy priorities, I place greater reliance on broader measures of affordability, housing need and market performance, including the Jersey house prices index and other published housing market data. While market activity is an important consideration, housing need and affordability remain the principal drivers of housing policy. Changes in market

conditions should be considered alongside wider evidence of housing need, affordability and long-term demand. My priority, therefore, remains supporting the delivery of the right homes in the right places and tenures, while ensuring improving affordability and access to housing for Islanders.

The Bailiff:

Any further questions on this matter? That concludes the period of questions with notice.

5. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Minister for Social Security

The Bailiff:

I will now move on to questions for the Minister for Social Security without notice, and the first question is from Deputy Tadier.

5.1 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

Before deciding to increase the long-term care charge with a percentage paid by people for that, did the Minister consider any more progressive alternatives to increasing that?

Senator M.E. Millar (The Minister for Social Security):

I would remind the Minister that the increase was proposed by the previous Minister. It was set out in the 2026 Budget, which was approved by the previous Assembly. We have delayed the introduction of that charge and we are proposing to introduce it on a phased basis. Yes, of course subsequent work has been conducted. We have looked at numerous options but they will not deliver the results we need quite so quickly. I think there is no question, I think this has been quite apparent since 2023. I do not think there is a question that the fund will need additional contributions in due course.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I just missed the last point, did the Minister say that she did not think it would need or it would not need funds?

The Bailiff:

It will need.

Senator M.E. Millar:

I have no doubt that it will need more funds; that was apparent from the last actuary review.

5.1.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

I know that there will be different funds for different things but it seems that Government on the one hand is saying it has too much money in certain parts of the Social Security Fund but it is trying to raise contributions for other obligations in terms of the long-term care. Meanwhile, we also have a scenario where we know that the contributions are capped for the wealthiest in society. Would it not be better for the Minister now - all Ministers - given that they seem to have a commitment to reducing the cost-of-living pressures, look to charge those who can most afford the increase in costs, rather than put the burden on those who are maybe struggling as middle and lower earners?

Senator M.E. Millar:

I have to remind everyone that long-term care is a hypothecated fund. It is funded entirely separately from social security. It is established and funded through a different law and it is funded through long-term care contributions, as well as by investment returns into that fund and a States Grant of some £40 million. Yes, we have considered what the impact of raising the upper earnings limit would be but it is not sufficient. Even if everybody who pays those higher taxes stay here and pay the higher taxes, it will not be enough. We do believe that we need a wider scope in terms of ongoing contribution.

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

Will the Minister advise what conversations she has had with the Minister for Economic Development about employment rights?

Senator M.E. Millar:

We have had some very early preliminary discussions, not really about employment rights but I think we are agreed that what matters is that we make sure that employers are complying with current rules. I do not think there is any point bringing in more legislation when employers we know are not already complying with the most basic of obligations to provide written statements of employment and payslips and to pay people on time. That is more important to many employees than some of the other rights that exist. I think it is important that we consider where there is friction, where there is uncertainty, where there is ambiguity. Can we make things clearer? We are going to be meeting in December to talk about work that may take place, that is likely to take place I think next year, on the trainee rate and a potential youth rate. I am entirely open minded on those but they will need to be consulted on widely. I think it very likely that we will do a consultation next year on the trainee rate and possibly on the youth rate.

5.2.1 Deputy T.A. Coles:

Does the Minister not support the idea that employment rights should take a back seat in relation to economic growth?

Senator M.E. Millar:

I think the Minister has been clear what he meant when he made those remarks. I certainly do not believe the economy should be asked to grow on the back of the poorest or at the detriment of employees. We have a very good framework of employment rights at the moment. If we find evidence of need to expand those rights, then, yes, clearly we should consider that. But I think it needs to be a case of need for Jersey and not simply because other people have them.

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

In its report about the minimum wage, the Employment Forum says that it consulted during the period of 28th May to 31st July but that the Minister for Social Security asked it to continue its consultation process until 18th September. Why did the Minister think that it was appropriate to make a political intervention into an apolitical and independent process?

Senator M.E. Millar:

I am not sure intervention is the right word. The Forum had been instructed to consult by herself as the former Minister. Given the huge amount of attention that was paid to the subject of the minimum wage over the summer, I thought it was appropriate to ask the Employment Forum to continue their consultation - I think they were probably unlikely to do that in any event - to make sure that additional thoughts and comments that had arisen during the summer months were also taken into account in the consultation. I do not think there is anything particularly objectionable in asking the Forum to extend the consultation to make sure that as wide a range of views as possible were captured.

5.3.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Can the Minister confirm whether she received representations from any stakeholders to encourage her to take that action and, if so, which stakeholders?

Senator M.E. Millar:

No, I did not. I made the decision myself.

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

Could the Minister give an update on her workplace pension work that she said is a priority for her in her Ministerial term?

Senator M.E. Millar:

I look forward to the Member supporting that scheme when it comes forward. I am trying not to use the term "workplace pension" because it creates a huge amount of anxiety and confusion. I think if we start suggesting to employers they all have to go and set up schemes, we will never get anywhere. The work we are picking up, I am trying to pick up the work that was done in 2022 and 2023 when I was previously Minister for Social Security. The previous Minister made a very reasonable decision to delay that work in favour of other priorities. We are picking that up now to just review where we reached at the end of 2023 and to then take that forward. I have spoken quite widely about it in the media. I have had some early meetings with the pensions industry. We will be, clearly, consulting very, very widely on that. I think the key to any new pension scheme is that it is simple, it is easy to operate, it is cost effective and that it works for Jersey, and that those are the main guiding principles. But there will be extensive consultation, and we have had some very early meetings about that and I will be consulting much more fully from the new year.

5.4.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

In light of the Minister not giving us an alternative to say, I will keep using "workplace pension" until she enlightens us on another word. But does the Minister consider access to a workplace pension to be a worker's right?

Senator M.E. Millar:

I am using the term "secondary"; secondary pension scheme. I am not sure it is a worker's right. I think it is something that good employers will do. The driver here is more about the fact that, I think, broadly 30 per cent of employees in Jersey do not have a pension scheme provided by their employer. There are many reasons for that. If you are a very small business it can be very difficult to establish a pension scheme for a small number of people. It is about a simple scheme that everybody can participate in if there is no alternative available to them. I think I have lost my thread of what the question originally was. Do I think it is a worker's right? I am not convinced. I would not frame it as a worker's right, I would frame it rather as almost a kind of financial services product provided through the employment relationship.

[12:15]

Some employers provide them, some do not. But I do believe it will be a benefit to employees who participate and enable them to have a better retirement and more financial security and financial independence in old age.

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

I know that the Minister is supportive of the whistleblowing legislation and I know that given that the U.K. is currently reviewing weaknesses in its own legislation, it is really important we get this right, and we need to learn from that experience. However, given the recent headlines, I think many of us share our frustration that we might still be 14 months away from the legislation coming before the Assembly. Would the Minister be willing to explore whether the remaining work could be accelerated so that we can introduce effective legislation as soon as possible?

Senator M.E. Millar:

As the Deputy rightly says, the U.K. are currently doing a consultation on their whistleblowing legislation. I believe the draft currently before us borrows quite heavily from the U.K. framework. It would really make no sense for us to proceed with that framework if the U.K. was to dramatically change theirs and create a different model. All I am going to say about the current proceedings is that they really highlight what a complex and difficult area this is. I think it is important that we get

it right. I think we have to think more widely, rather than not just how do we protect employees. Because it is not just about employees; that is another point. If you are an agency worker, if you are a temporary worker, then you are not an employee - if you are a trustee. There could be all manner of people who are not employees. There are a number of aspects to this, and one of the problems I think we do need to really think about is the mechanisms allowing people to whistleblow, that there are appropriate mechanisms, that everybody understands them and that in conjunction with that we look at employment protections. We will talk about this later. I fundamentally do not believe that the current draft is enough to either encourage whistleblowing or to protect those who do.

5.5.1 Deputy S.J. Gleave:

Thank you for that, Minister. I appreciate is a very complex area and one I am just trying to get my head around at the moment as well. But given that the U.K. is due to conclude its consultation, I believe in January 2027, could the Minister consider whether some of the remaining work could be undertaken in parallel with the aim of bringing the legislation in 2027 at least?

Senator M.E. Millar:

Clearly, the work will proceed over the course of this year. Clearly, if we can bring things forward earlier we can. But I do think we need to be informed by the U.K. There could be something we do in terms of looking at whistleblowing mechanisms, being clear what those are, doing a piece of education work. But we have limited resource and I have a number of other very big priorities for next year. The whistleblowing work, with the amendment, will mean that we really do have to focus on whistleblowing, rather than other things that we might have done. We will do that as quickly as we can, but I am reluctant to commit to an even earlier timetable. Because it is a difficult subject, we will need to consult with it again. I do not want to bring something that is not effective.

5.6 Deputy B. Ward of St. Clement:

The Minister has stated previously in her different roles that the Social Security Reserve Fund is very healthy, and there is plenty of money that is going to last for decades. Presently a retired person or informal carer cannot have their old-age pension and a carer's benefit at the same time due to the rules within Social Security. They have to choose one or the other; basically they choose the one that pays the most. Can the Minister consider, guided by the actuaries, a standalone carer's allowance, not a benefit, for the approximate 5,000 informal carers who are in receipt of their old age pension and, if not, why not?

Senator M.E. Millar:

I think that is very unlikely. If you bear with me while I do a quick calculation. To pay 5,000 carers £250 a week, for the sake of argument, would cost £65 million. Where is that money coming from? As I have tried to say to someone recently, we do not have a pot of money sat there waiting to be spent. We absolutely recognise the valuable role that unpaid carers do, the informal carers do. My predecessor did a report on this; we will be following up that report. We have accepted her amendment to the C.S.P. Most people do not expect to be paid for providing care to their own loved ones. People do it because they are family, because they are married to them, but they generally want different forms of support. We have put different forms of support in place already but I …

The Bailiff:

Your time is up, Minister. Thank you very much.

6. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Minister for Economic Development

The Bailiff:

We now move to the second period of questions for the Minister for Economic Development and the first question is from Deputy Carpenter and then Deputy Raimondo.

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

The Minister has sought to clarify his recent inflammatory remarks in the media on worker rights but the comments were made on video, so we can all see and hear precisely what was said. When the Minister makes public comments like: "We are going to have to make certain decisions that some may feel hinder worker rights, as well as the current minimum wage strangling our economy", does he fully appreciate the negative impact such comments can have on those who are on lower incomes?

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

None of my comments are made to be inflammatory, they are made to stimulate discussion and debate. But what is of note is that there is a small section of our community that take what I say, they make videos of me, they slate me on social media, they stir up on emotive issues like, for example, workers' rights. I never said that we should remove or reduce workers' rights at all. But people on social media think it is fun to whip up a frenzy against me, so I get slated on social media. My wife takes abusive phone calls and it is another reason why a lot of good people do not stand for this Assembly because of the abuse that they think that they will get **[Approbation]** if they stand up and make what is informed comment. I have not tried to inflame. Of course I am working to improve the lives of people. The reason I went back into the Assembly was so that I could improve the lives of the people of Jersey who I see have suffered over 20 years of no economic growth. This is why people feel worse off in Jersey, because they are worse off in Jersey. As I said in my speech when I stood for this role, if we in Jersey had seen only half the increase in wages as we had seen in the 1990s, then people in our community would be £7,000 better off. That is what I am fighting for. Just turning a line of not raising these issues does not help to form the debate. On the debate about the minimum wage - and I did apologise to the Chief Minister at the time because I did go about it incorrectly and I am sorry for that - but I think the debate came round to understanding that big increases in the minimum wage do not help everybody, and a lot of people it does not help. It boosts inflation which everybody pays for, and it makes Jersey business uncompetitive and that also is not good for our economic growth.

6.1.1 Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

I do not think I have received a response as to whether he appreciates that the negative impacts affects those on lower incomes, but we can move on. Does the Minister acknowledge that in order to grow the economy, which is clearly one of his primary focuses, it is very challenging to do so when working people have no disposable income to spend and that initiatives like a living wage, putting more money into people's pockets, can act as a boost to economic growth?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

We are having a rerun of the discussion before. For every person that gets an increase because the minimum wage has gone up, there are other people who find that their working hours are cut, that their overtime is cut, and for those people it is not helpful. This is why growing the economy is so important. This is also why we have got to be cognisant of the fact that our economy has shrunk, it has contracted for the last 2 years. Growing an economy is not easy. If it was easy we would have achieved it 10 years ago. It is not easy and there are difficult decisions that are coming up, decisions about planning, decisions about how our budget is being spent, and also decisions about how we are going to help people who are feeling the pinch, who are unable to pay for the increased prices that we have seen.

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

Given that tourism supports a wide range of businesses beyond those directly serving visitors, would the Minister consider adopting an economic multiplier when addressing the overall contribution of tourism to Jersey's economy, as is done in jurisdictions such as the Isle of Man?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, the Economic Adviser has talked to me about this. The G.V.A. (gross value added) for tourism is about 4 per cent - and I understand those are multiplier-affected - probably indicates that the real benefit to the Island is nearer 8 per cent.

6.2.1 Deputy G.A. Raimondo:

Thank you to the Minister for his response, and I do welcome that commitment. Given the importance of tourism to Jersey's wider economy, would the Minister be willing to commission an updated assessment of its full economic contribution, including that multiplier?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, I think we are already working on an equivalent of the *Time to Win* report for the rest of the economy. I believe that this is going to be part of that. As a result, I am sure Members will already know that I have increased the funding for Visit Jersey by an extra £900,000 for this year and also for next year, I hope to be making larger increases in their budget. Also, to try and increase the tourism coming to the Island in the shoulder months, we are also adding to Visit Jersey's budget £400,000 which were used for events in the Island. Again, the idea is to try and build an increase in visitor numbers during the shoulder months.

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

During a recent Scrutiny hearing the Minister outlined plans for a new investment fund supported by private capital. Can he clarify whether the proposed lending arrangements will be accessible to small businesses, particularly newer businesses, which may struggle to secure conventional finance because they are considered high risk?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, I can confirm that the fund, if it is established, will be available to all Island's businesses. I do say if; there is a long way to go on this still. But the idea is that we establish a fund that is available to invest in the economy. This is really important, I think, for everyone to please understand that if we can improve investment in our economy, improve investment to improve productivity, to improve our infrastructure, to help certain businesses to invest in what they are providing to customers, I think that will go a long way to helping to stimulate economic growth. The idea that we are formulating is that this money will be set up, it will be managed by professional fund managers and applications will be channelled through Jersey Business.

6.3.1 Deputy S.J. Gleave:

Does the Minister envisage the fund complimenting existing business support initiatives, helping small businesses move away beyond initial start-up support and access the finance they need to expand, invest in equipment and improve productivity?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Jersey Business already provides advice but now that the Better Business Support Package has come to an end, there is no other route to funding. I know of at least 2 start-up businesses in Jersey that really could have done with some sort of funding. This fund can take an equity stake or it can provide loans to businesses.

[12:30]

But I think it is one of the most exciting things that the Economic Development Department are working on at the moment. I have had some really positive meetings with members of the public who are committed to helping us achieve this.

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

Could the Minister give the Assembly an update on the work to obtain minimum income standards and when that work will be published?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

When I became Minister for Economic Development I was told that two-thirds of the work had been completed. I expect the work to be completed imminently, and I would have thought that before Christmas we will have the report to review.

6.4.1 Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Obviously that piece of work was commissioned with the help of the Economics Unit. Now that the Chief Economist is also the Chief Officer of the Minister's Department, can the Minister let the Assembly know how he may be managing any conflicts of interest that may arise through the individual having a dual role of both Chief Economist that provides objective economic advice to all Ministers and Chief Officer of his department?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, the Economic Adviser to the States of Jersey is the Acting Chief Officer for the Economic Development. The Economic Adviser takes very seriously his role to provide independent advice not only to the department but also to the States generally. His role in this is an oversight role because the work is being done by an external organisation associated with one of the universities, and I am afraid the university escapes my mind at the moment but I will look into that. The work is being undertaken by a third party. I can assure Members of the Assembly that the Economic Adviser takes his role to provide independent advice very seriously indeed.

6.5 Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North:

I was delighted to hear that the economic diversification has been discussed again and again this morning, and delighted also to hear that tourism is growing faster as we wish that it would be. I also wanted to draw Members' attention to the digital sector, which I believe that they take a few percentage of our G.V.A. as well. I would like to ask the Minister, what does the digital sector tell the Minister so far are the biggest barriers to growth in Jersey? How many of those related to skills that could be developed through our schools and colleges?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Yes, there is an issue about skills. Very often we need to bring those skills into the Island. There are a number of tech companies that have employees living off the Island but they dial in to work every day on a daily basis. From that respect, the skill issue is not so important. But the thing is if we want to continue to develop our technological sector in the Island, then we do need to tap into skills. The other thing I would say is that technology now cuts right the way across the economy and is very difficult to isolate the tech sector as providing a contribution to the Island's G.V.A., and there is debate about that. But what we do know is that it is really important for all businesses in Jersey to understand the importance of artificial intelligence, for example, as a means to drive productivity. That is another way that we are going to help to grow our economy and improve people's wages is if we can improve productivity. Artificial intelligence is one of those tools that can be used and is being used by a number of businesses in Jersey.

6.5.1 Deputy V. Li:

Back to my first question is that, does the Minister know if there is any data on the skills, considering we are going to look into A.I. (artificial intelligence), do we have any data about how we are supporting those skills in the schools and colleges right now?

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

Skills Jersey do keep a record of this and I think they are updating their skills report at the moment. We will certainly have a look at that very closely. I look forward to working with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning on this. But skills is something which is not only important to the Education Department but also important to the Economic Development Department.

The Bailiff:

Deputy Alex Curtis, you have got 45 seconds.

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

Will the Minister advise if he has had a chance to discuss the Impact Jersey scheme with Digital Jersey and whether he has any specific priorities he wants to see it deployed for in 2027?

The Bailiff:

In 20 seconds.

Deputy F.G. Voisin:

A report on the effects of the impact fund is being produced and so I will consider how to go forward when I see the report.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much, Minister. I note the time, it is nearly 12:45 p.m., do you want to make a start, Chief Minister?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Yes, Sir. I will be quick, Sir.

7. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Chief Minister

The Bailiff:

You have got 15 minutes. Yes, Deputy.

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

Deputy Tadier?

The Bailiff:

Yes.

7.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

I thought you were looking at me. Does the Minister have sympathy with the comments of a longstanding campaigner against child abuse in Jersey who said that the recent comments of the Police Chief about the inquiry being like a noose around the Island's neck is the exact kind of attitude that the inquiry was trying to highlight, and that it is these kind of attitudes that allows the abuse to carry on for so long?

Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister):

I can understand the action by some, and I do not endorse some of the comments made at that meeting and I am pleased to note that the Police Chief has acknowledged and apologised for that.

7.1.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

There is a wider issue here, and I suppose the Chief Minister also wears an S.E.B. (States Employment Board) hat. Does he agree that as a general principle - and I do not want to get into any ongoing tribunals that there may be, it would not be appropriate - and a look that Government wants to be seen to having, that suppressing any information that seems to already largely be in the public

domain now is not a good look for Government? Does he support moving towards a more transparent Government where we can learn from mistakes? Indeed, again, one of the, I think, broad recommendations that came out of the child abuse inquiry.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

The Council of Ministers met yesterday to discuss the ongoing Employment Tribunal case at that meeting. Ministers accepted that the case must continue to take its course and that lessons must be learned in relation to internal Government processes and the handling of such cases. This includes strengthening political oversight and the use of respectful and appropriate language at all times and a review of the data privacy arrangements. Ministers have also agreed that the video of an internal meeting can be shown in court, subject to seeking appropriate privacy and personal data safeguards. Work on whistleblowing legislation is ongoing and arrangements have been strengthened since the case came to light. Ministers were unanimous in wanting to make it clear that when concerns relate to senior members of staff, a new provision has recently been introduced which permits whistleblowers to step outside the government system to an independent body that is not directly involved in the Government. Ministers further recognised that work must continue to improve safeguarding standards across the Island and can confirm that Government will provide a further statement once the tribunal work is completed.

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

Could the Chief Minister confirm whether the former Chief Executive, Dr. Andrew McLaughlin, is still engaged by the Government in any capacity following the handover to a successor on 1st October and, if so, in what role?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I am not aware if any role has been approved currently.

7.2.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you, Chief Minister, for your answer. His contract as the Chief Executive ran until December 2026; can the Chief Minister confirm whether that contract was brought out early therefore and if there was a sum attached to that?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

It is my understanding that the contract ended when the Chief Executive left, and that was agreed by both parties.

7.3 Deputy B. Ward of St. Clement:

Under Articles 50 and 51 of the Security Law, if it has been agreed that we can withhold money from the Grant and it is enacted, it is done on a temporary basis. If we look, that money has been taken since 2000, 6 years out of 7 this money has been taken. May I ask the Chief Minister to state what safeguards and guarantees are in place for the future security of the Pension Fund and to publish a funding policy of the States Grant? Because we are very concerned about the nature if this behaviour continues that we are withholding money on a year-on-year basis, not on a temporary basis.

The Bailiff:

Are you able to answer that question without notice under Standing Order 65(2)(c)?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I will have a go, Sir, if I may.

The Bailiff:

Yes, of course.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

The Deputy might want further information. The proposed Budget 2027 to 2030 that Members will debate shortly continues the approach agreed by the Assembly in last year's Budget of temporary reductions to the States Grant. Having said that, the States Grant is increasing year on year by some £30 million to £52 million. This approach is intended to provide funding for urgent priorities, while maintaining the commitment to return to the full formula by 2030. The Minister for Social Security is developing a long-term strategy for the Social Security Scheme, which involves considering how the scheme should be funded sustainably in the future, including appropriate balances between contribution income, investment income and the States Grant. The next actuary review is well underway and should be expected to complete by March 2027. That will of course form any further decisions. I would add that the fund is in good shape. The Minister for Treasury and Resources reminded me there was an actuarial review in 2006, which estimated that the fund would be exhausted by 2038. We have been fortunate that in recent years the fund has received considerable income in investment return, which should put it in a very favourable position, but we know we cannot rely on that into the future.

7.3.1 Deputy B. Ward:

Thank you very much, Minister, for responding. For clarification, did you say 2006 or 2026 the last time there was an actuary review? Because my belief is it was 2021, so it will be nearly 5 years ago.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

If I can just expand on that a little bit. There have been 6 actuary reviews of the fund, and I was referring to an actuary review back in 2006. There have been a number of reviews since then, the previous one I think was 2021, the next one will be next year. The point I was trying to make is that actuary reviews will give their best estimate at the time. But in one back then, fortunately, the fund has performed much better than that. But we are mindful not to rely on significant investment returns into the future.

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

At the start of the previous Government they launched a strategy for substance use, a change of direction; that strategy is still ongoing. Given that we have heard of the impact on substance use and domestic abuse on homelessness, does the Chief Minister believe that a Ministerial group should be formed to look at this substance use strategy in the round?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I would need to think about that and discuss that with relevant Ministers. I know it is an area of concern and consideration, but that is a matter I would need to discuss. I am not opposed to it because we want to make sure we have the structure in place to deal with the matter as best and as efficiently as we possibly can.

[12:45]

7.4.1 Deputy T.A. Coles:

Will the Chief Minister, if that does go ahead, commit to bringing in the Minister for Housing obviously, as homelessness becomes a point with substance use and domestic abuse? It would be good to have a Ministerial group that deals with the round of substance use and the strategy around homelessness.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

I think absolutely, yes. I think the Minister for Housing will want to be and is concerned with that, given the causes of homelessness, especially in the under-25s, the area we are talking about has significant impact on that.

7.5 Deputy T.A. Coles:

If there is time. How does the Chief Minister plan to deal with Ministers who keep speaking about other Ministers' remits in public?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Could the Deputy give me an example, please?

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Certainly there was one example earlier in this year where one Minister talked about the Minister for Social Security's role in the minimum wage, as well as the same Minister talking about employment rights, which also falls to the Minister for Social Security.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

The Deputy and I, I think, dealt adroitly with the first instance. I think all Members are entitled to have their views. We work collegially across the Council of Ministers to make sure we understand each other's briefs, and we work collaboratively with that. As I said, I do not necessarily agree with all of the views of all Ministers, but that is absolutely fine. In relation to the recent comments by Deputy Voisin, he has explained exactly what he meant. Just to reaffirm, this Government has no plans to reduce or withdraw any employment legislation. We will keep it under review and we will not hesitate to actively find there are weaknesses in the law. I am sure Deputy Voisin would support that position.

7.6 Deputy M. Tadier:

Continuing in the same vein, it is my understanding that in the previous Government with the Code of Conduct, that if a Minister were to speak on another Minister's territory in public perhaps without their knowledge; that was taken very seriously. It has happened twice on this occasion. I am sure that the Minister may, like me, want to listen back to today's *Hansard* where the current Minister for Economic Development said that he struggled to toe the party line on certain issues. Would the Minister clarify what the current situation is with the Code of Conduct for Ministers?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

The current situation is the same. The Code of Conduct is clear, which is why the Deputy recognised that he had stepped slightly out of line in the first comment. The comment on employment legislation is conversations that have been had between him and the Minister for Social Security in the past, and I did not consider it to be stepping out of line. I am talking about the process in line with the Code of Conduct and, therefore, I do not believe any Code of Conduct has been breached.

7.7 Deputy T.A. Coles:

Given the main debate starting this afternoon is the Common Strategic Policy, can the Chief Minister outline why the Government has accepted some strategies and rejected others when it seems to be inconsistent across the different amendments?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

We would either accept them all or none at all. We looked at them all very carefully and Ministers decided to accept the ones they could support and felt would enhance the plan.

7.7.1 Deputy T.A. Coles:

Given the Common Strategic Policy is the new Government's manifesto for delivering over the 4-year term, where work is considered already underway, would not supporting more of those work underway amendments be more consistent with showing the direction of travel and the aims of the Government be consistent across the 4-year term?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

A number of the amendments that were presented were indeed in relation to work in practice. In some instances Ministers decided not to accept them because they were already underway and making good progress and there was no need to add them to the priorities that we are putting before the Assembly later today.

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

Will the Chief Minister advise whether there have been any new services launched digitally since his re-election in July?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Yes, but I wonder if I could just double-check and get back to the Deputy to clarify that. I am thinking about a couple of services but I am not sure whether they have been launched yet.

7.8.1 Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Does the Chief Minister have any position on how he wishes to publish and keep up to date the public on improvements made to the digital platforms and what they can take advantage of under his Government?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Yes, in the way we have done in the past, working with the relevant teams. I think we need to make additional efforts, as we see technology developing, and we launch more interactive services to assist the public and provide better access to government platforms. I also believe we need to up our work and how we communicate that.

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Chief Minister. I think that brings that period of questions to an end.

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT PROPOSED

The Bailiff:

The adjournment is proposed. Are Members content now to adjourn? We adjourn until 2:15 p.m.

[12:51]

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT

[14:18]

STATEMENTS ON A MATTER OF OFFICIAL RESPONSIBILITY

8. The Minister for Infrastructure will give a statement regarding the States of Jersey Complaints Board: findings (R.139/2026)

The Bailiff:

The next item of business is a statement by the Minister for Infrastructure.

8.1 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade (The Minister for Infrastructure):

I am giving this statement in response to R.139/2026, a States of Jersey Complaints Board report. I thank the Board for its work and I would like to give my response. I have considered the matters raised in the report at some length and have taken appropriate advice, but this response is my own view. I find myself in the unusual situation of rejecting almost all of the Board's findings but accepting almost all of its recommendations. Let me explain. The case concerns who is responsible for maintaining a parapet wall on top of the seawall in front of the Brise de Mer Apartments at La Grève d'Azette. The individual who brought the complaint argues that the Government should

maintain the parapet wall. The Department's case is that the parapet wall is not part of the seawall and so is outside its maintenance responsibilities. The Board found in favour of the complainant. The Board's complaint conclusions rest on the 2 pillars, first, that the parapet wall and the seawall are, essentially, one and the same. Second, that because the 2016 contract between the Government and the owners of Brise de Mer relating to various legal responsibilities, does not mention the parapet wall, references in the contract to maintaining the seawall must be taken to include the parapet. In other words, the parapet's absence from the contract means the contract treats the 2 walls as one. I dispute both conclusions. Turning first to the parapet, the Board noted that the parapet wall had been constructed directly on top of the seawall using "slightly different but consistent materials." It appears to have taken at face value the complainant's reference to the "granite work" forming the parapet and it said that no evidence had been presented that a third party had built it. The implication is that there is little to distinguish the 2 walls and no proof that they were built separately by different parties. This is simply not tenable. The 2 structures are clearly different in multiple ways and at Brise de Mer the difference is particularly stark. The seawall is built of large quarry dimension stone, mostly granite. The parapet is built of small unshaped blocks of dark rock, quite possibly gabbro, that have not been commercially quarried and almost certainly derived from the adjacent shoreline. In simple terms, the seawall is a professionally constructed sea defence, while the parapet was built at a later date with different rock quarried by different methods and built to a different standard. Clearly, there are 2 walls, a seawall constructed by the public as a sea defence and a parapet constructed at a later date by parties unknown, but certainly not by Government, as a sea defence. Therefore, I do not accept the finding that there is no evidence that the wall was constructed by a third party. Turning now to the 2016 contract which was central to the Board's conclusions. Establishing that the walls are separate is important when looking at the contract. The Board's view is that because the parapet is not mentioned it must be assumed to be part of the seawall, and the responsibility for the parapet flows from the public's ownership of the seawall and the land. However, the 2016 contract does not proceed on that basis. For example, clause 11 establishes that: "The public's ownership of the seawall and the foreshore are separate from responsibility for private structures that sit on, against or beyond them." Clauses 5, 6, 8 and 15 are based on the same principle. The contract records that the 2 openings through the seawall and the 2 sets of steps attached to it had been created "without legal right" and it then regularises them. Under those clauses the purchaser keeps, maintains, repairs, removes, replaces and indemnifies in respect of these structures at its own cost. That the public granted rights of access and kept oversight of works that could affect the seawall does not mean it accepted responsibility for every structure attached to, supported by or sitting on top of it. Furthermore, the contract describes the seawall as a public sea defence constructed on the foreshore by the public. It specifies certain encroachments that may remain and it sets out detailed rights and obligations relating to the seawall itself, those encroachments, the openings in it, the steps attached to it and the structures north of it. The parapet is not mentioned. My conclusion is, therefore, the opposite of the Board's. The failure to identify the parapet in the contract, despite its known existence as a separate structure, means it is not covered by the contract. Another way of looking at it is that if it is not identified as part of the seawall or as an unauthorised encroachment, the presumption must be that the parties to the contract did not intend to deal with it. Having said that I reject the key parts of the Board's reasoning, let me try and be positive and offer what I hope is a practical solution. The public maintains that the parapet is not part of the seawall, it performs no sea defence function and is not governed by the 2016 contract. However, recognising both the uncertainty surrounding its origins and its longstanding physical integration with a public asset, the public is prepared, as a matter of pragmatism and sound asset management, to take responsibility for its future management and maintenance as a separate structure. This would not alter the contractual position, nor does it amount to an acceptance that the parapet forms part of the seawall. Any maintenance would be undertaken as ordinary asset management and with public fact of safety as the only determining factor, not as maintenance of sea defence infrastructure. In practical terms the department will assess the condition of the parapet with public safety as the test, rather than its ability

to function as a sea defence. If that assessment shows the wall is at risk of falling, Government will stabilise it. In the meantime the wall will be monitored. The owners of Brise de Mer do not need to carry out repairs to prevent the wall from falling down, but it will be the Department's professional judgment that will determine when that point is reached. In the medium term it is worth adding that the question of coastal protection for the properties along the seafront in this area will be addressed by the Havre des Pas Coastal Flood Alleviation Scheme, which, should it be approved and funded, would provide new coastal protection in front of the existing seawall. To summarise my response to the Board's 3 recommendations, recommendation 1: "That the Minister inspects the seawall and arranges repairs at public expense." I accept in part. The parapet wall will be assessed and, if necessary, works needed for public safety will be carried out at public expense. However, I do not accept that this follows from the parapet being part of the seawall or a flood defence structure. Recommendation 2: "That future negotiations with adjoining landowners aim for a fair, equitable, clear and permanent outcome." I accept but on the basis of the principles outlined in this statement. Recommendation 3: "That the Minister assists constructively with practical measures in future matters concerning seawalls and parapet walls." I accept. I am happy to take questions from Members.

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Minister. We will now move to up to 15 minutes of questions.

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

In his statement the Minister says that the parapet is an add-on and not part of the seawall. However, it was the gap in the so-called parapet for which homeowners were charged with encroachments in the past, including the former owner of this very property, which was the subject of a penal hearing in 2018. Can the Minister outline, why has the Department changed its stance now?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I am not aware of whether we have or not. I have dealt with the report in front of me, which does not make any reference to previous cases. I think the assessment that I have made has been on the basis of the arguments that are being presented to me in the report, along with advice that I have received in the course of trying to determine my response. That is the only answer I can give on that I am afraid.

8.1.2 Deputy C.S. Alves:

Will the Minister look back on the decision that was taken on the States Complaints Board's finding? It was published as R.71/2018 of the previous homeowners?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I will certainly do that but I think it is important to state that the conclusion that the wall is a separate structure is a standalone conclusion. It is a separate structure and the consequences of that are what I outlined in my statement in terms of interpreting what I was asked to do. I would also say that in practical terms we have agreed to do something that in the past has not been agreed to be done, so I would hope that that would be seen as a positive step forward in this case.

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

This is the second time in 8 years that a Complaints Board has ruled against this Department at this same site and the E.H.I. panel recommended a separate sea defences maintenance policy back in 2020. Does the Minister have such a policy and would he commit to publishing one so it sets out who maintains which parts of the Island's sea walls and how often they are surveyed so that other coastal owners around the Island do not have to go to a Complaints Board to find out?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I am not sure that a full report of that kind would be appropriate. We are dealing with a relatively small number of cases, and many of them are subtly different in terms of the extra walls, where they are positioned and what function they serve. What I would say is that it is absolutely clear in this case that this is not a sea defence structure. I have spoken to the Chief Officer who deals with shoreline protection. The parapet wall does not and cannot serve a sea defence function. It is simply not constructed in that way. The wider question of sea defence in this area and a considerable expanse of this area right the way from La Collette effectively round to La Grève d'Azette will be dealt with when we come to consider the Havre des Pas Coastal Flood Alleviation Scheme, which I referenced in my statement, which, should it be adopted and funded, would provide a comprehensive solution by advancing the line and effectively creating a new line of sea defence in front of the existing structures. That, I think, is the comprehensive answer that would solve the problems that have been raised in this case.

[14:30]

8.1.4 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I thank the Minister for his answer. Would that mean then going forward if the Havre des Pas scheme is funded and advances the line, that the Government will have to do the maintenance of the sea defences and it will be the Government's responsibility?

Deputy J. Renouf:

Yes, absolutely. If the Government constructs a sea defence structure it is the Government's responsibility to maintain it.

8.1.5 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

The Minister described this solution as a pragmatic response to findings that he disagreed with but with recommendations which he did agree with. Does he also agree that another alternative is not necessarily to call it pragmatism but to call this an example of a Ministerial fudge?

Deputy J. Renouf:

Obviously I am not going to describe it as that. I think there is a sense in which you cannot win in that case. I have tried to address this independently with a fresh set of eyes as a new Minister approaching the problem. I was not involved in the hearing that led to the Complaints Board report. It took place I think either just before or a few days after I took office. I was informed it was happening, but obviously I was not in a position to be a party to it so I have tried to bring some independent thought to it. I have tried to find a way forward that offers some comfort but without conceding fundamental principles which I think are important. If the Deputy wishes to call it a fudge he is welcome to do so, I guess.

8.1.6 Deputy M. Tadier:

Another area of concern is that the Minister does not accept the findings of the Complaints Board. Does this mean that the Minister does not have confidence in the Complaints Board?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I think having a disagreement does not necessarily mean you lurch straight into a position of having no confidence in a Board. The process allows me to reach an independent conclusion based on my own analysis of the situation. I have great respect for the Complaints Panel and the Board that was set up to examine this particular matter. I simply reached different conclusions, having considered all the evidence, so I do not think it means that I have a fundamental issue of confidence in the panel.

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

The Minister, as he has mentioned, mentioned the Shoreline Management Plan or the Havre des Pas Coastal Flood Alleviation Scheme, depending how we are going to word it. How does this report, his conclusions and the willingness to maintain this wall, affect and impact the boundary disputes that may come once that flood alleviation scheme has been developed about where those secondary walls are then built?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I am not sure I understand. In broad terms, the Havre des Pas Coastal Flood Alleviation Scheme will position a new wall in front of the existing sea defence and parapet walls - I think something like 10 metres but I would have to check - and then it creates new land, effectively, behind that. What happens to structures that sit on what will then be the old sea wall I think is a completely different question. It is no longer a sea defence structure and I guess we would have to look at that.

8.1.8 Deputy T.A. Coles:

I would probably come in more of a privileged position, having been a representative of Havre des Pas and seen a lot of the flood defence drawings that have come up. As the Minister acknowledges, there is an advance to line but there are still certain points along the sea defences currently where there are walls which are at the end of people's gardens or building walls. If these walls sit on the sea wall, will they be considered the boundary and those walls remain or, if the public owns the capping stone, as it were, the current granite top stone of the sea defence, is that the boundary and any new privacy wall will be set back further giving the public access to the foreshore as it was handed over by the Crown?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I have not addressed that question, but I do not think that would be the case. I think that the situation would not change in respect of walls and where they currently sit.

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

I just wondered if on reflection of how this whole complaint process has been handled, and given that Islanders have some view about responsiveness of government officials, whether or not he believes there were any missed opportunities for earlier intervention in the resolution to this complaint?

Deputy J. Renouf:

I do not think I am going to get into a commentary on what happened before I became Minister. I think the Complaints Panel has stated that there could have been better communications. I think that is the main area that possibly is relevant to what the Deputy is asking. I believe very much in open communications and being as communicative as we possibly can when we are dealing with these things, and I have certainly made that clear. The question of whether there was a failure in this point, sometimes we get criticised for poor communications when what is happening is we are communicating a message that people do not want to hear and so I make no judgment on that except to say that I accept that we should always do our very best to deal with complaints that are received in a timely and appropriate way, and I have made that clear to officers.

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

Can the Minister say what mechanisms would improve outcomes for both Islanders and Government when issues like this arise in the future? An ombudsman would seem to be an option.

Deputy J. Renouf:

My position on a public service ombudsperson is a matter of record. I am in favour of it. It is interesting. I did look at this judgment through the eyes of an ombudsperson or rather I asked an A.I. agent to look at it through the eyes of an ombudsperson and say: "What would be the differences

between perhaps an ombudsperson operating in the U.K. judging this?" and I think the main point they drew out was that the judgment of the Complaints Board made some fairly definitive legal claims and that a public service ombudsperson operating in other jurisdictions would probably avoid straying into that territory. I do remain convinced that the question of public service maladministration would be better addressed through a fully independent of a public service ombudsperson, and I do think it would improve the standard of administration and ultimately potentially save money for the Government in terms of complaints avoided.

8.1.11 Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

At a recent Scrutiny meeting the Chief Minister confirmed that there is a line in the 2027 Budget for an ombudsman, so could we ask the Minister whether he is prepared to lobby his fellow Council of Ministers to get it established next year because I do not see it in the C.S.P.?

8.1.12 Deputy J. Renouf:

I am probably not in the business of lobbying my fellow Ministers, but I think there will be discussions around that and the appropriate way for those funds to be deployed in the future. I think that is a fair question to ask and I expect there to be some discussions.

The Bailiff:

Any further questions for the Minister? Thank you, Minister. That concludes the questions for you in relation to that statement.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

9. Reduction of lodging period

The Bailiff:

Before we begin Public Business a decision needs to be made about whether to reduce the minimum lodging period in relation to a matter on the Order Paper. The matter to consider is the Draft Agriculture and Fisheries(Loans) (Jersey) Regulations lodged by the Minister for the Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries. Minister, do you wish to make the proposition under Standing Order 26(7) that the lodging period be reduced to allow this matter to be debated at this sitting?

9.1 Senator M.R. Le Hegarat (The Minister for the Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries):

Yes, please, Sir.

The Bailiff:

Do you wish to say anything in support of that?

Senator M.R. Le Hegarat:

Yes, please. I seek Members agreement to reduce the lodging period so that the Draft Agriculture and Fisheries (Loans) (Jersey) Regulations can be debated and, if approved, come into force as soon as possible. Members approved the Agriculture and Fisheries (Loans) (Jersey) Law 2026 in March. These regulations simply provide the detailed operational framework needed to implement the modernised scheme that this Assembly has already endorsed. Bringing these regulations into force at the earliest opportunity will ensure that agricultural and fisheries businesses can benefit sooner from the updated arrangements and that the modernised scheme can begin operating as intended. I am grateful to the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel for considering the proposals within the compressed timeframe and for confirming that it has no objections. I therefore ask Members to support this request.

The Bailiff:

Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]** Does any Member wish to speak on the proposition? Those in favour of adopting the proposition kindly show. Thank you very much. The proposition is adopted and the lodging period is reduced.

10. Common Strategic Policy 2026 – 2030 (P.75/2026) - as amended

The Bailiff:

The first item of Public Business is the Common Strategic Policy 2026-2030 lodged by the Council of Ministers. The main respondent is the chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. There have been a total of 23 amendments lodged. Chief Minister, is the Council accepting some of the amendments to the Common Strategic Policy?

Senator L.J. Farnham (Chief Minister):

Yes, Sir. We are accepting amendments 8, 13, 17, 2, 3, 9, 14 and 15 where we have amended amendments, which have been also accepted so would it be in order to ask that the proposition is read with that in mind?

The Bailiff:

Yes, so just to be clear, I think we have received version 6, and I know you gave the amendments, Chief Minister, in a certain order but they are listed on the document we have as amendments 17, 8, 13, 14 as amended, 15 as amended, 9 as amended, 2 as amended and 3 as amended. Is that correct?

Senator L.J. Farnham

Yes, Sir.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much. Are Members content to take the proposition as amended by these amendments?

Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:

Just for the avoidance of doubt, I note you did not mention the Council of Ministers or the Minister for the Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries amendment to the C.S.P., amendment 23. Could you just confirm that that will be taken as its own debate?

The Bailiff:

Absolutely, yes.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Just to clarify, we did not mention that because the Deputy wished for it to be taken separately.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much. In that case I ask the Greffier to read the proposition as amended by the amendments to which I have just referred.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The States are asked to decide whether they are of opinion – in accordance with Article 18(2)(e) of the States of Jersey Law 2005, to approve the statement of the Common Strategic Policy of the Council of Ministers as set out in the report accompanying this Proposition except that taking into account the 17th amendment: "(a) On page 4 of the report, after the words 'connected and supported', there should be inserted the following paragraph: 'Jersey's ageing population and falling birth rate are among the most significant long-term challenges facing the Island. They affect the size of our workforce, demand for health and care services, housing needs and public finances. We will take account of demographic changes across all priorities of the Common Strategic Policy.' (b) On page

9 of the report, after the words 'where the Island can compete', there should be inserted the following paragraph: 'We will work with businesses to maximise the opportunities created, and address the challenges posed, by an ageing workforce, and support social inclusivity throughout the economy.' (c) On page 13 of the report – (i) there should be inserted the following new action 6.5: '6.5 Introduce and implement the Age-Friendly Infrastructure Framework as agreed by the States Assembly'; (ii) after the words 'an ageing public estate' there should be inserted the words ', an ageing population,'; and (iii) after the words 'more resilient places' there should be inserted the following paragraph: 'We will present the Age-Friendly Infrastructure Framework to the States Assembly and begin implementing it during this electoral term, so that new homes, transport, public spaces and public buildings work for Islanders at every stage of life.'" Taking into account the 8th amendment: "(a) on pages 5 and 17 of the report, within priority 10, the words 'practical and affordable' should be substituted with the words 'practical, affordable and just'; and (b) on page 17 of the report, after action 10.1 there should be inserted the following action: '10.2 Ensure that any costs of transition to a low or zero carbon economy, do not disproportionately impact Islanders on low incomes, or those employed in carbon-intensive industries'." Taking into account the 13th amendment: ", except that on pages 5 and 19 of the report, the title of Priority 11 should be substituted with the following: 'Deliver a more efficient and effective public sector with a permanent focus on value for money'". Taking into account the 14th amendment as amended: "On page 10 of the report, after paragraph 2, there should be inserted the following new paragraph: 'We will ensure that any new or amended regulations that require interaction with Government will be delivered through the Digital Government Platform, unless a more suitable alternative is already in use, while retaining in-person and offline support.' On page 14 of the report, after paragraph three, there should be inserted the following new paragraph: 'Within the Government, we commit to an ambitious programme of digitisation on a common and affordable platform, supporting external contributors where it is safe. We will allocate departmental project budgets to assist the overall centralised budget for those programmes that provide services to those departments and measure the cost of implementing new services, ensuring that costs are driven lower through A.I. and modern ways of digital working.'"

[14:45]

Taking into account the 15th amendment as amended: "(a) On page 11 of the report, in action 5.2 the words 'in the heart of St Helier' and ', releasing the land at Highlands College for new homes and development opportunities' should be deleted; and (b) on page 11 of the report, in paragraph 4 the words 'in St Helier' and 'supporting town regeneration and releasing land for much-needed homes and development opportunities,' should be deleted, and paragraphs 6 and 7 should be deleted." Taking into account the 9th amendment as amended: "on page 14 of the report after paragraph 7, there should be inserted a new paragraph as follows: 'We will recognise charities and social enterprises as part of the Island's social infrastructure. We will strengthen relationships with the third sector to aid long term planning, and support sector level development and collaboration; and prioritise prevention and early intervention to promote stronger and safer communities.'; and on page 19 of the report, after 11.2 there should be inserted the following: '11.3 Introduce multi-year funding agreements with charities and social enterprises that deliver public services and set out in future Budgets how prevention and early intervention will be prioritised'; and (b) on page 19 of the report, after the last paragraph, there should be inserted the following new paragraph: 'While securing value for money, Government will ensure its commissioning and procurement processes are fair and proportionate, apply social value consistently across all tendering, and treat charities and social enterprises as delivery partners.'" Taking into account the 2nd amendment as amended: "On page 15 of the report, after action 8.4 there should be inserted the following action – '8.5 Continue to maintain and improve support for unpaid carers, disabled Islanders and older people with care needs, building on the actions taken as a result of the 2026 "Ministerial Review of Support for Unpaid Carers and People with Care Needs".'" Taking into account the 3rd amendment as amended page 15 of the report, after action 8.4, there should be inserted the following: "8.5 Develop and implement an

updated Disability and Inclusion Strategy for Jersey, in partnership with disabled Islanders, and continue to monitor and improve the accessibility of Government services and facilities."

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Greffier.

10.1 Senator L.J. Farnham (The Chief Minister):

I am pleased to present today the Common Strategic Policy 2026-2030 on behalf of the Council of Ministers, and I would like to begin by recognising the thoughtful engagement of Members from across the Assembly. The number of amendments before us reflects the seriousness in which Members have approached this debate. They have come from a different perspective and proposed different solutions but they share a common purpose: a desire to improve the lives of Islanders and to strengthen Jersey's future. That is something we should acknowledge from the outset because while there will no doubt be differences of opinion during this debate I believe there is also substantial agreement about the challenges facing us and about our collective responsibility as an Assembly to address them. The question before us is not whether those challenges exist. We see them every day. The question is how we respond to them and whether we can provide the direction and certainty that our community expects. Jersey enters the next 4 years from a position of strength. We remain a safe and stable jurisdiction. We have a strong international reputation. We have resilient public services. Our economy continues to provide opportunities for many Islanders and we possess something perhaps even more important, a community that consistently demonstrates its ability to adapt, respond and succeed in the face of change, yet we would be doing Islanders a disservice if we ignored the pressure that many continue to face. For too many people the cost of living remains a real concern. Too many Islanders find access to housing difficult, whether they are renting or looking to buy their first home. Public services face growing demand. Infrastructure requires investment. International competition is intensifying and global uncertainty remains a fact of life rather than an exception to it. These challenges are serious but they are not beyond our ability to solve. Our task as an Assembly is not simply to identify problems. It is to make decisions that provide confidence and provide direction and purpose, and that is what this Common Strategic Policy is intending to do. No Strategic Policy can be all things to all people, neither should it try to be. The purpose of a Common Strategic Policy is not to create an exhaustive catalogue of aspirations or to include every worthwhile idea. It is to set priorities. It is to establish a framework for decision-making. It is to guide the allocation of resources and perhaps, most importantly, it is to provide a clear basis against which the public and this Assembly can hold the Government to account. Good government requires choices and the central choice within this Common Strategic Policy is a commitment to focus our efforts on the issues that matter most to Islanders. At its heart this policy is about creating greater security, greater opportunity, greater confidence and greater focus. These objectives are reflected in our determination to make Jersey a more affordable place to live, to increase the supply of homes, to strengthen the competitiveness of our economy, to invest in essential infrastructure, to support high quality public services and to maintain the sound public finances upon which all of those ambitions ultimately depend. These are not separate ambitions. They are connected. A strong economy creates opportunities for Islanders and generates the revenues required to support public services. Sound public finances give us the capability to invest in infrastructure, public realm and respond to future challenges. Homes allow individuals and families to build security and put down roots. Skills education and public services help ensure that everyone can contribute to and everyone can benefit from our success. Taken together they form a coherent vision of a Jersey that remains outward-looking and well-prepared for the future. The amendments before us today illustrate the depth of commitment that Members bring to these questions, for which the Government are grateful. Many of these amendments focus on issues that are already familiar to Islanders: housing, affordability, environmental stewardship, public services, economic development and the protection of our unique Island identity. Others seek to place greater emphasis on particular priorities or approaches. It would

be easy during this debate to focus solely on the points where we disagree, but I believe that would be a mistake because when we step back and look across the amendments as a whole we see something else. We see a broad recognition that Jersey must remain affordable. We see a shared desire for better housing outcomes. We see support for a strong and sustainable economy. We see concern for our environment, our communities and for future generations, and we see a collective determination to maintain the qualities that make Jersey such a special place to live. The debate in many respects is often about emphasis, timing or method. That is entirely legitimate and, indeed, it is one of the strengths of this Assembly that ideas are tested, challenged and improved through scrutiny and good debate. The Government welcomes that process. Constructive challenge strengthens policy, it strengthens decision-making and ultimately it strengthens our democracy. But as we consider the various options before us, I would ask Members to keep one principle in mind: focus matters. Every Member of this Assembly can identify additional priorities. Every sector can present a compelling case. Every case has its advocates yet resources, time and capacity have to be prioritised. The challenge of Government is not finding worthwhile things to do. The challenge is determining which things matter most and ensuring they are delivered well. This Common Strategic Policy reflects those choices. It is intentionally a focused strategy. It is intended to be deliverable and it is designed to provide the consistent direction needed over the next 4 years. This Government and this Assembly will not be judged by the number of objectives we include within a document. They will judge us by whether we had the discipline to focus on what mattered and the discipline to see it through. That is a responsibility of stewardship, the responsibility of the stewardship we all hold. No Common Strategic Policy can answer every question. No Government can satisfy every preference. No Assembly will ever agree on every detail, but progress requires direction. It requires a willingness of us all to look beyond the immediate debate and consider the long-term interest of the Island we all serve. This Common Strategic Policy provides that direction. Today we have an opportunity to provide certainty where there is uncertainty, focus where there is pressure and confidence where there is concern, and I hope we can take this opportunity together as an Assembly and that we can provide a clear sense of purpose for the years ahead, and I hope we can do so in the knowledge that our responsibility is not simply to manage the present but to leave Jersey a stronger, a fairer and a more secure place for those who will follow us here. To that end, I commend the Common Strategic Policy to the Assembly. **[Approbation]**

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Chief Minister. Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]**

10.2 Common Strategic Policy 2026 – 2030 (P.75/2026): twenty-second amendment (P.75/2026 Amd.(22)) - Subsequent Common Strategic Policy

The Bailiff:

I move on to the first amendment to be debated, the 22nd amendment, and I ask the Greffier to read the amendment.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

On page 2 – After the words "report accompanying this Proposition" insert the words – ", except that, in paragraph 3 on page 2 of the report, the words "over the next four years" should be deleted, with any subsequent references in the report to a four-year term for the proposed Common Strategic Policy to be amended or deleted accordingly"". Page 2 – After the words "report accompanying this Proposition" insert the words – ", except that on page 5 of the report, after the words "drive forward and be held accountable for as a Council." there should be inserted the following new paragraph – "To ensure that the Common Strategic Policy is a deliverable and measurable plan, the Council of Ministers will bring forward the legislative changes required to allow for a new or updated Common Strategic Policy to be lodged and debated before the 2028 Budget is debated, with the Policy's priorities and actions aligning with the timeframe of that Budget."".

The Bailiff:

Deputy Rebindaine will propose the amendment.

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

I rise today to make my inaugural speech in this Assembly, and in doing so I bring this amendment while posing 2 fundamental questions. The first is simple: where are we going? The second follows naturally: how do we intend to get there? Anyone embarking on a journey understands the importance of a map and a compass. Today our map is the Common Strategic Policy. Our compass is the Budget. Before approving either we must be clear about one thing: what course are we setting for Jersey? That is why this debate matters. The C.S.P. is not the Assembly's plan. It is the Council of Ministers' proposed plan. Our responsibility is to decide whether it represents the direction in which we wish our Island to travel. We are told that the C.S.P. serves as the strategic framework for Government yet we are also told that many priorities will be delivered through existing budgets, policy reform, legislative change, reprioritisation and improvements to delivery. That leaves an important question unanswered: is the C.S.P. genuinely the document that drives decision making or is it simply one set of views among many? Either it is the framework against which major decisions are judged or it is not. If it matters it should determine priorities, shape budgets and influence spending over the next 4 years. If it does not then we should be honest enough to say so because, as I see it, we have a C.S.P. plus 14 Ministerial agendas, which cannot be ideal. There is great merit in setting out a vision. History is full of leaders who have inspired people through vision. When Churchill promised that Britain would fight on the beaches nobody stopped him and said: "Which beaches and how much ammunition remains available?" That was a statement of purpose but this Common Strategic Policy is not presented as a statement of purpose. It is presented as a programme with priorities that can be measured, monitored and ultimately judged. If that is the case, those priorities must be supported by a credible financial and practical pathway. Governments can make promises. They can publish attractive documents and ambitious objectives but sooner or later every promise meets a spreadsheet. That spreadsheet will tell us what Government are really prepared to prioritise. Good intentions are not enough. Ambition is not enough but before deciding what we spend we should address a more fundamental issue. What kind of Island do we want Jersey to be?

[15:00]

Do we want a Government that continually expands their role whenever a new challenge emerges or do we want a Government focused on delivering excellent public services, maintaining sound finances, creating the conditions for prosperity and enabling individuals, families, communities and businesses to thrive? Every Budget, every policy, every strategic direction, reflects an answer to that question. The size of Government, levels of taxation and public spending are all shaped by our underlying philosophy. That is why direction matters. I stood for election because I became increasingly concerned that Jersey has been drifting away from the course that made it successful. Ships rarely become lost overnight. The problem begins with a small deviation, a few degrees off course, barely noticeable at first, yet over time those small deviations accumulate and eventually you arrive somewhere very different from where you intended to be. I fear Jersey has experienced exactly that process: a succession of well-intentioned decisions each defensible in isolation but collectively moving us further away from the characteristics that once made this Island such a remarkable place to live, work and raise a family. That concern formed the basis of my manifesto. I wanted to chart a different course, one that restores confidence, strengthens competitiveness, improves affordability and ensures future generations inherit opportunity rather than burden. During the election campaign one message emerged above all others. Islanders told us that the cost of virtually everything has become too high. Young people struggle to see a path to home ownership. Working families face increasing pressures. Pensioners worry about maintaining their standard of living. Businesses face rising costs and declining competitiveness. That message was remarkably consistent. Housing costs are too high, food costs are too high, nursery fees are too high. Many Islanders feel that they are

working harder simply to stand still. At the same time, voters delivered another message with equal clarity. They want Government to become more efficient. They understand the importance of healthcare, education and public services, but they also expect Government to live within their means, spend money wisely and provide value for taxpayers. They expect efficiency, accountability and a willingness to challenge unnecessary expenditure with the same discipline that families apply to their own household budgets. When I examined the Common Strategic Policy, 2 priorities stand out. The first is the commitment to take targeted action to ease cost-of-living pressures. The second is the commitment to deliver a leaner and less complex public sector with lower running costs. They are intrinsically linked. A more efficient Government should create the financial capacity needed to reduce pressures on Islanders. The savings generated through better value Government should help fund improved affordability. The challenge is demonstrating that relationship will work in practice. When I examine the detail I am not yet convinced that connection has been clearly established. The affordability measures identified focused largely on families with young children. These measures are surely justified but they are not the only Islanders under pressure. Pensioners are struggling. Renters are struggling. Young adults trying to establish independent lives are struggling. Businesses are struggling with increased employment and operating costs. A serious affordability strategy must recognise the breadth of those pressures. At the same time, Government continue to place additional costs on Islanders. Long-term care contributions are proposed to increase. A liquid waste charge remains under consideration. Deferred 2019 tax liabilities begin falling, due next year. Each measure may be defensible in isolation but collectively they raise a simple question. How does affordability improve if Government continue to seek additional contributions from the very people they say they wish to help? That question deserves an answer because affordability cannot simply be an aspiration. It must be reflected in the cumulative impact of Government decisions. A newly elected Council of Ministers needs time to review priorities and determine how services should be delivered. I do not just accept that; I endorse it. The 2027 Budget is seen as a transitional Budget. No one in Treasury seems to disagree. I welcome that honesty, but if 2027 is a transitional year then 2027 must also be a year of preparation. What workstreams will be commissioned to transform public service delivery? What plans will be developed to reduce unnecessary management layers, streamline decision-making and improve productivity? How will resources be redirected towards front line services and improve outcomes for patients, students, pensioners and businesses? Those are the questions Islanders will rightly ask and those are the details we need to see. At present they are largely absent from the document before us. I was not elected simply to accept assurances that improvements may be delivered at some point in the future. I was elected to scrutinise, challenge and hold Government accountable, so my advice to the Council of Ministers is straightforward. Use the next year wisely. Do the analysis. Build the business cases. Reimagine government departments so they look like the shape of an Egyptian pyramid, large bases of front line staff with slim peaks of management hierarchy. Develop a fully-costed programme of reform equal to the challenges before us, then return to this Assembly with a plan that is clear, measurable and credible. Our Island does not lack ambition. What it has too often lacked is the discipline required to turn ambition into achievement. This amendment is intended to strengthen the connection between strategy and delivery, between aspiration and accountability, and between the promises made to Islanders during the election campaign and the actions that follow because, if June's election is to mean anything, Islanders must see evidence that their vote has produced not merely a change of personalities but a change of direction. That ultimately is what this amendment seeks to achieve. I ask that the Council of Ministers return in 2027 with a C.S.P. It can be the same one or preferably, as I have indicated, a better version but either way costed and underpinned by the 2028 Budget. I look forward to hearing the views of my colleagues in the Assembly. **[Approbation]**

The Bailiff:

Is the amendment seconded? **[Seconded]**

10.2.2 Senator L.J. Farnham:

I was pleased to join the approbation for the Deputy's maiden speech. I rise to ask Members to reject amendment 22 and I do so respectfully, and I thank the Deputy for taking the time to discuss his amendment with me prior to the debate. I am most grateful for that. The Deputy's amendment I believe is motivated by a desire to ensure that the Assembly has sufficient confidence in the funding and delivery of the priorities set out in the Common Strategic Policy. That is a legitimate objective and it is one that the Council of Ministers shares. Where we differ is how that objective is best achieved. At first glance this amendment may appear procedural. It may appear to be a modest request for a further review of the Common Strategic Policy before the next Budget, however the implications are far more significant than that. This Assembly is today being asked to approve a Common Strategic Policy that sets the strategic direction of Government for this Ministerial term. It exists to provide clarity of purpose, stability of direction, and a framework against which Ministers can be held accountable. What this amendment proposes is that within the first year of that journey we should reopen that framework, revisit it and potentially replace it altogether. I would suggest to Members that a strategic policy which can be set aside less than halfway through its life ceases to be strategic. This amendment is founded on a misunderstanding of the relationship between the Common Strategic Policy and the Budget. The C.S.P. is not a spending plan. It never has been nor was it ever intended to be, from its very conception. A Common Strategic Policy answers one question: what are the priorities that should guide this Government? The Budget answers a different question: what resources should be allocated to support those priorities? The 2 documents are connected but they perform different functions. To require the C.S.P. to be revisited because not every future policy proposal has a fully developed funding model is to confuse strategy with implementation. Good government does not work that way. The reality is that some of our most important long-term projects require further work before precise costs can be established. That is not a weakness in a plan. It is responsible governance. Whether we are discussing a higher and further education campus, investing in Jersey projects or longer-term reform of health and care funding, it would be neither realistic or prudent to claim today that every cost, every option and every funding requirement has already been determined. That work must be undertaken carefully. Business cases must be developed, options must be assessed, affordability must be tested, and only then should detailed funding decisions be made. That is precisely why we establish our strategic priorities first, and develop detailed funding arrangements as those projects mature. The amendment also risks creating uncertainty where certainty is needed. The purpose of approving a Common Strategic Policy is to give Islanders, public services and businesses confidence about the direction this Assembly intends to take. It provides a stable framework for decision-making. It allows for officers to plan. It allows services to prepare. It allows investment decisions to be taken. It allows delivery to begin. So what message do we send if at the very point we approve that framework we also signal that it may need to be rewritten before the next major Budget debate? What certainty will that provide? What confidence does it create? Rather than strengthening accountability I fear it would weaken confidence in the very framework that Members are being asked to endorse and, at a practical level, Members should consider the consequences. A further Common Strategic Policy debate would not simply appear from nowhere. It would require legislative change. It would require drafting resources. It would require Ministerial and departmental time. It would require officers to divert time away from the delivery, and yet into more process. Our resources are not unlimited. Every hour spent preparing a replacement strategic policy is an hour than cannot be spent progressing the work Islanders expect us to deliver. At a time when we are advancing major legislative programmes, strengthening resilience, modernising services, and pursuing significant infrastructure investment, I do not believe that that is the best use of public resources. Members should also ask themselves what additional accountability this amendment would create that does not already exist. Ministers are already accountable through annual budgets. Ministers are accountable through Scrutiny. They are accountable through questions without notice, oral and written questions, propositions, debates, and public reporting. Every Budget brought before this Assembly must demonstrate how resources support our strategic priorities. Every Minister can be challenged on delivery, every priority can and

is scrutinised. The mechanisms are already in place. The amendment does not create accountability, I believe it duplicates it. I accept entirely that Governments must remain responsive to changing circumstances. No strategic document should become anything other than that. But that flexibility already exists. Policies and projects can and do evolve. What should not continually evolve is a fundamental strategic direction that guides those decisions, because without stability there can be no sustained delivery, and without sustained delivery, strategic plans become little more than aspirations. Ultimately, at the end of the day, this debate comes down to a simple choice. Do we want a Common Strategic Policy that provides a clear framework for 4 years of Government, or do we want a Common Strategic Policy that is reopened and reconsidered before it has had a chance or an opportunity to prove itself?

[15:15]

In closing, I would reaffirm that the Council of Ministers believes Islanders are best served by clarity, by consistency, and at this time, by our focus. Amendment 22 risks introducing uncertainty where certainty is required, and process where progress is needed, and for those reasons I ask the Assembly to reject the amendment.

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

I want this Government to succeed, and that is why I support this amendment. Not to pull down the 4 pillars, but to strengthen the foundations on which they stand. Cost of living, competitiveness, investment and financial stability are ambitions that unite this Assembly. They are important objectives and they deserve broad support. But the question before us is this, will these pillars genuinely govern our decisions or will they simply organise the pages of a document? A Common Strategic Policy is not a test of whether something matters, it is a test of whether it should be a strategic priority. In the coming days, or hopefully not days, but in the coming hours and maybe days, we will debate many worthwhile amendments. Many will be sensible. Many will be well intentioned. But the fact that something is worthwhile does not automatically mean it belongs in the C.S.P. Government responsibilities do not disappear because they are absent from this document. Those matters can still come before the Assembly. It has been rightly recognised. They can still be debated. They can still be acted upon. None of us have a crystal ball. We cannot anticipate every challenge, every opportunity, or every future pressure. The Chief Minister has just recognised that what we need is a framework. One that guides decisions as evidence emerges. Not a checklist that attempts to predict every eventuality. But I would argue that what is in front of us is a checklist, not a framework. Every commitment, as the Chief Minister has also recognised this morning, competes for resources, capacity and attention. An attention like money is finite. The C.S.P. should guide the work of Government, not try to catalogue all of it. So it must be a living document, clear in purpose, disciplined in focus, and capable of adapting when circumstances change. If those pillars are to support Jersey's future, they need strong foundations beneath them. The *Time to Win* approach offers one such foundation. The C.S.P. promises to expand it beyond finance. Let us give that ambition real substance. A bold digital strategy could provide another. Estonia has demonstrated what becomes possible when Government builds shared digital infrastructure and allows public services to exchange information securely and efficiently. Imagine what that could mean for Jersey. Islanders providing information once not repeatedly, businesses spending less time navigating departments and more time growing, public servants spending more time helping people and less time moving information between systems. This is not simply a technology project. It contributes directly to every pillar. For affordability, it removes unnecessary costs, for competitiveness, it reduces friction for business, for investment, it creates infrastructure fit for the future, and for financial stability, it helps deliver better public services without an ever-growing administrative burden. That is what a strong foundation looks like. Jersey needs its own time to win. An approach that connects our economy, our public services, and Islanders' living standards. But not every commitment belongs in the foundation. Some belong in what sits above the pillars, the roof. There are services, protections

and safeguards that preserve the progress we make and protect those who might otherwise be left behind. Those policies do not necessarily strengthen every pillar directly. Their purpose may be different. Their purpose may be protection, but they must still fit within the overall structure and avoid undermining the foundations and the pillars beneath them. A good strategy must do both. It must create the conditions for progress and protect the people that progress is meant to serve. That means confronting trade-offs honestly. Deputy Rebindaine has highlighted possible increases in long-term care contributions and potential liquid waste charges. Care for services and infrastructure have to be funded, no one disputes that. But raising contributions may support financial stability while simultaneously making life more expensive for Islanders, and that is exactly why strategy matters. A strategy should require us to examine alternatives, challenge assumptions and justify where the balance has been struck. Our cost-of-living pillar must influence decisions across Government, not simply the measures listed beneath a heading in a document. We cannot give with one hand, take with the other, and still claim success because we completed the actions listed on a particular page. The real test is much simpler. Taken together, do our decisions make life more affordable, because Islanders do not experience Government in separate chapters? They experience Government as a whole. Consider the proposed £250 payment for each school-aged child in eligible families in 2027; that support matters and I welcome it. But helping a family pay a bill is not the same as changing why that bill is so high in the first place. You cannot hold a building together with Sellotape. Temporary assistance made by time, sometimes it is necessary, but it should not become a substitute for addressing the underlying causes. The C.S.P. rightly recognises the need to tackle those causes. The challenge now is to demonstrate how that ambition becomes a creditable programme for delivery, and that brings me back to this amendment. Next year's proposed 3-year Budget will provide a much fuller picture of the Island's finances and the choices available to us. This amendment would ensure that we review the strategy alongside that information. It would create a formal checkpoint supported by the necessarily legislative changes before the 2028 Budget is debated. Ministers argue that the programme can already evolve over time, and I welcome that acknowledgement, and their concern is that this amendment creates additional work through legislation and another strategic debate, and that is a fair point. But we are not simply agreeing 4 broad principles. We are not just being asked to agree the pillars that can sit unchanged for 4 years. We are agreeing an entire programme of commitments, and this Assembly should have the opportunity to reconsider that programme as a whole when the evidence is stronger and the financial position is clearer. What is proposed is not a wholesale restart. It is a health check. A moment to ask sensible questions. Are the foundations strong enough? Are the pillars working together? Does the roof provide the protection Islanders need? Asking whether a budget funds our commitments is not the same as asking whether those commitments taken together will deliver the future we want. There will be work involved, but good scrutiny always requires work, and better decisions are worth it. Checking the foundations is not an obstacle to building. It is how we build with confidence. We should help Islanders today, but we should also build a Jersey in which fewer Islanders face those pressures tomorrow. That is the difference between treating symptoms and addressing causes. So let us agree to test this programme when we know more, not because we expect it to fail, but because we want it to succeed. I urge Members to support the amendment.

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

I have to say that I do have some sympathy with Deputy Rebindaine and the frustration that has led him to bring this amendment. I do share some of that frustration. I think the sheer number of amendments lodged to this Common Strategic Policy demonstrates that a significant number of Members believe the document as originally presented needed improvement. I certainly do, and I have lodged several amendments to it myself. But while I understand Deputy Rebindaine's concerns, I disagree with his proposed solution. I think we need to remind ourselves why the Common Strategic Policy exists. Article 18 of the States of Jersey Law 2005 requires a new Council of Ministers to bring its strategic policy to the Assembly within 4 months of appointment, and no later than its first

Budget. There is very good reason for that requirement. When a Government takes office, it needs to establish its direction and priorities. The public sector needs to know what Ministers expect it to deliver. Departments need a framework within which to develop policy, plan their work, and prioritise resources, and this Assembly needs clear commitments against which it can hold Government accountable, and that is the purpose of the Common Strategic Policy. I also wanted to reflect briefly on the circumstances in which the previous C.S.P. was developed, because I know that that has been referenced. I was a Member of the Council of Ministers that brought forward the 2024 to 2026 Common Strategic Policy. That Government had taken office midway through the electoral term following a vote of no confidence. We had had a relatively short period in which to deliver, and there was a need to restore stability, address immediate challenges and make practical progress. The Chief Minister at the time described that C.S.P. is a plan for the remaining 2 years, focused on essential services and the most immediate challenges facing Jersey. I think that that approach was understandable in those circumstances, but we are in a very different position today. We have a newly elected Assembly and a new Government at the beginning of a full 4-year term. This is the opportunity to set out a longer-term vision for Jersey. Not simply a list of things Government intends to do next year, but the direction in which it wants to take our Island over the next 4 years. That, to me, means being ambitious about the outcomes we want to achieve. Even when some of the detailed policies and funding arrangements still need to be developed. I do recognise Deputy Rebindaine's concerns about the longer-term financial position, but a Common Strategic Policy is not a 4-year Budget. What is does do is establish the strategic direction. The detailed policies, business cases and funding decisions follow that, and those decisions should be guided by the priorities the Assembly has agreed. I think that this is an important point. Of course, not every activity undertaken by Government can or should appear in a C.S.P. Departments have statutory responsibilities and essential services to deliver, regardless of what is written in this document, but what is missing from the C.S.P. matters just as much as what is included, because the C.S.P. should be the reference point for Government's departmental business plans, policy development and allocation of resources. It should influence which projects are prioritised, where effort is directed and what Ministers expect their departments to achieve. Indeed, the Chief Minister has confirmed that there will not be separate Ministerial plans with priorities instead reflected in departmental business plans. That makes the connection between those plans and the C.S.P. even more important. If an objective is not included, it can become all too easy for it to slip down the list when other pressures arise, and it becomes more difficult for this Assembly to hold Ministers to account for something they have never explicitly committed to deliver. A strategic priority should mean something. That is why I believe that we need to get this document right now. My concern with Deputy Rebindaine's proposal is that it would make the 4-year direction provisional, requiring Government to return with another strategic document next year, but we risk spending another year reconsidering the roadmap rather than making progress towards delivering it, and I do not believe that is what Islanders expect from a newly elected Assembly and Government. But I also wanted to make a point to the Council of Ministers. Rejecting this amendment should not mean simply accepting the C.S.P. as read.

[15:30]

Quite the opposite. The number and range of amendments before us demonstrate that Members have identified areas where the strategic commitments could be clearer, stronger or more ambitious, and I hope Ministers will approach those amendments with an open mind. We have already seen that agreement is possible. I have been pleased to reach agreement with the Government on my amendments concerning carers and disability inclusion, and there is no reason why that constructive approach should stop there. Accepting sensible amendments throughout this debate is not a defeat for Government. It is an opportunity to strengthen the C.S.P. and build wider confidence in the direction being set. This is the Council of Ministers' Strategic Policy, but it does require the approval of this Assembly, and that approval should mean something. I want us to emerge from these debates with a clearer, stronger Common Strategic Policy, one that sets out a meaningful vision for Jersey

over the next 4 years, one that provides direction to the public sector, and one against which Islanders and this Assembly can judge the Government's performance. The answer to a C.S.P. that needs improving is to improve it now, not postpone that decision for another year, and for those reasons, while I understand Deputy Rebindaine's intentions, I cannot support this amendment.

10.2.5 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:

Just to highlight a couple of points that the Chief Minister made. I would like to thank Deputy Rebindaine for bringing an amendment that is in a category of its own, I think. It is not about achievement. I may disagree with it, but it is the only one that has stepped outside the normal parameters of a C.S.P. debate and it has made us think. But I would like to draw Members' attention to one key quote from Deputy Rebindaine's report. It says that if his amendment passes: "Members would therefore be able to assess the Council of Ministers' priorities alongside the resources proposed for their delivery and approve any changes needed for the remainder of the term." My simple point is we do not need this amendment to achieve that goal. Members will be perfectly capable of checking whether the next Budget aligns with the C.S.P., so I think this amendment is redundant in that what it is seeking to achieve is already baked in, but it is destructive in that it imposes a superfluous requirement to change the law and rewrite the C.S.P., diverting huge amounts of Government time to achieve very little in terms of adding clarity and precision to what we are doing. The point is that it is the C.S.P., as the Chief Minister said, that shapes the Budget, not the other way around. Therefore, the amendment gets the argument the wrong way. It will be wrong to revise the C.S.P in the light of the Budget because the direction of causation is in exactly the opposite direction. I think I will leave it at that.

10.2.6 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I think it merits - the Deputy's first amendment and speech, and I congratulate him, I was listening just now outside the door, and listening nonetheless - at least some perhaps longer debate than it has had so far, and I think I would like to hear from a number of Ministers on the position, not just the Chief Minister that has spoken, because notwithstanding the very good speech from my party co-leader, who has covered in fact most of the bases both in terms of our position but also with a Scrutiny hat on, is that there is a more fundamental question which is probably best addressed early on in this debate at this juncture, which is the nature of the C.S.P. which the Deputy, in moving this, I think is touching on already. A point has been made by my co-leader colleague that this is very much the Council of Ministers' C.S.P. but having it passed by the Assembly has to mean something, but nonetheless it does remain a document of the Council of Ministers. I would put a question out there to perhaps the Privileges and Procedures Committee and to the chairs of the Scrutiny Panels whether or not, ultimately, it is a good use of the Assembly's time and the Scrutiny function's time to scrutinise something that is essentially a political manifesto of Government. We know that what would normally happen in most ordinary democracies around the world is that a Government would produce its manifesto before seeking office and that it would simply implement that manifesto when it got into office. It would either do that through having a majority of its seats or it would do that through having to work on a coalition basis, looking at comparing manifestos from a multitude or perhaps 2 parties that ended up in Government. Indeed, that is probably what is going to happen in Israel at the moment, and is going to happen in other countries that have to decide where they can find agreement. That in America, of course, is perhaps the most obvious area where they are going to have to redecide what the political landscape and what the outlook will be for the remainder of their course of office. But we do think slightly differently in Jersey. Because we have a dysfunctional, I would say, political system where we elect not just 3 categories of Member but also largely independent Members, some of whom get elected on, you could argue, very light manifestos compared to maybe others who get elected on more comprehensive ones, they have to scrabble around for the first few weeks, a month, to decide if indeed they have any common ground that they can share and we end up often with, what I see, very much a lowest common denominator, it has

been said elsewhere - hopefully it might be the last time, but it might not be - motherhood and apple pie in terms of a document. The question is do we want some sides with that? Do we want it served with cream? Do we want it served with ice cream, custard? Or do we prefer to have it *naturel*? That is very much, I think, what the amendments that are being put to the C.S.P. are questioning. But it could easily be that in future the C.S.P. would be presented as a report and that simply Government tells the rest of its colleagues in the Assembly what it is that it wants to do, and it goes ahead and does it, and Scrutiny scrutinises, Back-Benchers also scrutinise and come up with propositions, and really, ultimately, we know it is the Budget which is where the big decisions are made, because that is where we can influence what gets done in meaningful terms. I also question the fact that when we have C.S.P. and the Budget lodged at the same time, it does provide, I would argue, not necessarily sufficient bandwidth for both official and unofficial scrutiny to be going on, and it does perhaps add an extra level of argument as to whether or not the C.S.P. is valid. But we have to work under the current system we have. I think it is therefore incumbent for the Council to try and have a consistent approach to which amendments it is accepting and the rationale for doing that. I do not think we have had those comments yet, but I do recognise that there is still time in the next 24 hours, and indeed maybe 48 hours, for the Council of Ministers to reconsider whether they have been too hasty in rejecting some very valid amendments from Back-Benchers which they could very easily have adopted.

The Bailiff:

Does anyone else wish to speak on the amendment? If no one wishes to speak, I call upon Deputy Rebindaine to reply.

10.2.7 Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

I stand probably 2 hours earlier than I imagined I might. I would like to begin by thanking those Members who have spoken during this debate. We may not always see things the same say, and we may not always agree on the best route forward, but nobody seeks election for a quiet life. We stand for office because we care. We care about our Island, about our communities, and about the people who place their trust in us. The Chief Minister and I both know that. Through this debate, I have been clear about my preference. I would have liked the next Common Strategic Policy to be lodged next year. I explored every possible avenue to achieve that outcome, but the law, as Deputy Feltham has mentioned, simply does not permit it without legislative change. That is an unfortunate reality. However, to suggest that bringing forward the work required by this amendment would divert too much resource, in my view, is simply shying away from doing what is right. The cost of establishing the right course now pales in comparison to the cost of not doing it. Failure to make the necessary decisions today could well prove far more expensive by the time we have reached 2030. Indeed, the timing of the Fiscal Policy Panel's report published only last Friday could not have been more relevant to this debate. The panel stated that if no further action is taken, the Strategic Reserve will be £1 billion below its minimum recommended level by 2030. It noted that the Stabilisation Fund remains exhausted. It described the projected surplus as only a modest - I repeat, modest - improvement in the fiscal position. It warned that the smaller the surplus from day-to-day operations, the greater the need to fund capital projects either through borrowing or by drawing down reserves, both of which reduce Jersey's fiscal resilience, and it reminded us that capital expenditure should only properly be regarded as investment when it generates a positive net economic return. Taken together, these observations underline the concern that I have raised. Stripping out the hospital for a moment, it remains far from clear how the ambitions contained within the Common Strategic Policy will be funded from recurring revenue. The question therefore remains, how will these projects be paid for? Will it be through borrowing, effectively placing a mortgage on the futures of our children and grandchildren? Will it be through rising charges, which we should not pretend are anything other than another form of taxation? Will it be through drawing down increasingly scarce reserves? Or will it be through the proceeds of the Pillar Two funds which have been presented as a windfall

opportunity to help build the hospital and replenish resources depleted first by the global financial crisis and then by the COVID pandemic? As things stand today, none of those options appear acceptable to me as a basis for signing off a plan extending to 2030. Members will recall that I began with an analogy of a map and a compass. But a map and a compass are only useful if we know where we are going. What if there is no destination marked on a map? It is a need-to-know basis only. A whole section of the landscape is blank, leaving us with only the vaguest sense of direction. Or perhaps there are several destinations marked with an X, and rather than a journey with a clear purpose, we are simply following a circular bus route, stopping here and there, without any agreed end point. Or perhaps the reality is even more concerning; that we simply have not yet decided where we are going. In those circumstances, both the map and the compass become largely redundant. Before I conclude, I thought I would share a brief reflection from Friday's Poppy Appeal coffee morning in St. Mary. As Members know, St. Mary has a reputation for political engagement, high voter turnout, and because of its relatively small electorate, often produces early results that are remarkably reliable indicators of wider electoral outcomes. During the course of the event, I spoke with 6 parishioners. Without exception, every one of them told me that were they sitting in this Assembly today, they would support this amendment. Now, I am not presenting it as scientific evidence or as a substitute for the deliberations of this Assembly, but it does serve as a reminder that Islanders continue to watch us and expect us to ask searching questions before committing to long-term plans on their behalf. This is ultimately what this amendment seeks to do. The Council of Ministers, the Chief Executive and accountable officers should still have important work to undertake before this Assembly should be asked to sign off a plan that carries us through to 2030. We owe it to the public to ensure that our destination is clear, our route is credible and our means of getting there are affordable. For those reasons, I commend the amendment to the Assembly and ask Members to support it. I ask for the appel.

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy. **[Approbation]** The appel has been called for. Members are invited to return to their seats. I ask the Greffier to open the voting.

[15:45]

If all Members have had the opportunity of casting of their votes, I ask the Greffier to close the voting. I announce the amendment has been rejected:

POUR: 8		**CONTRE: 39**		**ABSTAINED: 0**
Connétable of St. Clement		Senator L.J. Farnham		
Deputy A.F. Curtis		Senator I.J. Gorst		
Deputy B. Ward		Senator A. Maclean		
Deputy S. Gleave		Senator M.R. Le Hegarat		
Deputy C. Leck		Senator T.J.A. Binet		
Deputy V. Li		Senator H.M. Miles		
Deputy G. Raimondo		Senator M.E. Millar		
Deputy C. Rebindaine		Senator Sir M.J. Boleat		
		Senator S. Kersten		
		Connétable of St. Mary		
		Connétable of St. Martin		
		Connétable of St. Peter		

		Connétable of St. Brelade		
		Connétable of St. Helier		
		Connétable of St. John		
		Connétable of St. Ouen		
		Connétable of Trinity		
		Connétable of Grouville		
		Connétable of St. Saviour		
		Connétable of St. Lawrence		
		Deputy M. Tadier		
		Deputy L.M.C. Doublet		
		Deputy C.S. Alves		
		Deputy K.F. Morel		
		Deputy G. Voisin		
		Deputy M.B. Andrews		
		Deputy R.E. Binet		
		Deputy T.A. Coles		
		Deputy C.D. Curtis		
		Deputy L.V. Feltham		
		Deputy M.R. Ferey		
		Deputy H.L. Jeune		
		Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée		
		Deputy J. Renouf		
		Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson		
		Deputy K.M. Wilson		
		Deputy L. Carpenter		
		Deputy R. Parker		
		Deputy Philip Josue Romeril		

10.3 Common Strategic Policy 2026 – 2030 (P.75/2026): twentieth amendment (P.75/2026 Amd.(20)) - Island-wide outcomes data for schools

The Bailiff:

The next amendment is the twentieth, lodged by Deputy Li. I ask the Greffier to read the amendment.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

1. Page 2 – After the words "report accompanying this Proposition" insert the words – ", except that on page 5, under Priority 5, in the column entitled 'Island Outcomes', after the words "Jobs and Productivity Growth", there should be inserted the words "Learn and Grow"". 2. Page 2 – After the words "report accompanying this Proposition" insert the words – ", except that on page 11, after Action 5.2, there should be inserted the following – "5.3 Publish annually, from 2027, Island-wide

outcomes data for all schools, including fee-paying and grant-aided schools, as multi-year trends alongside attendance, pupil mobility, N.E.E.T. (not in education, employment or training) and home-education figures, to direct support where it is needed"".

The Bailiff:

I invite Deputy Li to propose the amendment.

10.3.1 Deputy V. Li of St. Helier North:

Before I begin, for transparency, I am currently the school Governor for St. Michael's Preparatory School, a private school that receives no Government grants. As I read my amendment, it does not extend to schools like that, but I declare it so that Members are in no doubt. I spend much of my time in this Assembly asking one question: how we do know it is working? As Chair of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Panel, I have asked it in public hearing one after another since I took the role. I speak for myself today, not for the Panel, but too often the honest answer has been that we do not have the data. This amendment is about putting that right when it matters most, our children's learning. It has 2 parts and Members will vote on them separately. I will take each in turn and set out what Ministers have said and explain why I believe there is still nothing there they need to oppose. In June 2009, in the middle of the financial crisis, this Assembly spent 4 days on the Strategic Plan; a.k.a. (also known as) C.S.P. nowadays. They voted 37 to nothing to strengthen civic and personal education, and Members were told that literacy and numeracy would be measured. Seventeen years later, we are still asking to see those outcomes clearly across the whole of Jersey. We were confident then, and we had reasons to be, but confidence is not preparation, and when we cannot measure outcomes we tend to invest in what we can see: buildings. But what decides Jersey's future is harder to see. It is about the people. What our young people can do and whether they choose to stay. Part A adds "Learn and Grow" to the Island Outcomes for Priority 5. Priority 5 is to increase lifelong learning. Learn and grow is the Island outcome for learning, yet today none of the 11 priorities in the C.S.P. is measured against it. The Government's own *Time to Win* report says education and training will be critical as artificial intelligence changes entry level jobs. If learning matters that much to our competitiveness, the priority for learning should answer to the outcome for learning. The Council of Ministers rejected this amendment, but its comments gave no reason to reject part A. It costs nothing. It changes no policy. It means that when Ministers report on this C.S.P., they report on learning. Part B asks Government to publish every year from 2027 Island-wide outcome data for our schools, including fee-paying and grant-aided schools as trends over several years, alongside attendance, pupil mobility, N.E.E.T. (Not in Employment, Education and Training), and home education figures so that support goes where it is needed. Think of 3 children: the pupil who changes school mid-year; the young person who leaves school and is not in education, employment or training; the child whose parents have chosen to educate them at home, a choice we rightly give to the families. We know who these children are. What we do not know is how they are doing, and so we do not know how to give them and their families more help. The department already tells us who is in our schools. Since 2018, the number of pupils with a record of need has more than doubled, but the planned attainment report, as Ministers listed, does not mention results by need. Ministers give 4 reasons to reject part B, and I agree with all of them. First, they say most of this is already being delivered. I thank the Minister and Assistant Minister for pointing out that there is now an education data publication policy. The Minister has committed to publishing exam results for all schools by 2027. In 2024, the Children, Education and Home Affairs Panel, under the current Minister's own chairmanship, recommended wider education of results and value-added figures for each secondary school. So, if this is being delivered, supporting part B asks nothing new of the Ministers. Second, they say attainment alone does not give a complete picture. I absolutely agree. That is why part B asks for outcomes, alongside attendance, pupil mobility, need and home education. The context is the text. Third, they say destination data must be robust before it is published and that grant agreements must change before grant-aided schools are included. I agree with both. Nothing

here asks the Minister to publish data that is not robust or to reach agreement. This C.S.P. runs to 2030. If either take longer than 2027, I would rather the Minister told this Assembly so than that we have no commitment at all. Every summer, young Islanders leave school asking whether there is a future for them here. We should at least know where they go next. Fourth, they say it is too prescriptive. It says what the Islanders should be able to see, not how the department does it. This is not about the league tables. My Children's Rights Impact Assessment sets out how to protect a very small group of pupils and recommends that the Minister's application arrangements have their own full assessment. The method stays with the Minister. So, in part A, no reason has been given to reject it. On part B, Ministers and I want the same thing. The only question is whether it remains a departmental policy, which a Minister can change alone, or become a decision of this Assembly, which Ministers report to us against. There is an old piece of advice: "Mend the roof while the sun is shining." Knowing how our children are doing is how we find out whether the roof needs mending. Together, the 2 parts help us reach the children and the families we are not yet helping enough. I ask Members to support both parts. I ask for the amendments to be taken into 2 parts, part A and part B, and I call for the appel. Oh no, sorry.

The Bailiff:

A bit later on perhaps. **[Laughter]** Thank you, Deputy.

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

If I may, a point of clarification?

The Bailiff:

Yes, point of clarification. Are you prepared to take a point of clarification from Deputy Morel? He is going to ask you to clarify something you have said in your speech. Are you content to do that? You have got a choice. Yes.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

Thank you. It is just at the beginning the Deputy said, understandably, she talked about St. Michael's school not being included in this amendment, but in the speech she talked about fee-paying schools being included. I just wanted to understand which schools in Jersey would not be subject to this amendment, particularly the league tables part? Could she just list which schools are not included? Because I understood her to say St. Michael's that was not included but then talked about fee-paying schools being included.

Deputy V. Li:

I think this is down to the Minister, about her agreement with the schools across the Island, and I would hope that all the schools will publish all of their data together.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

So, if I understand correctly, the hope is that this amendment would seek to cover all schools in Jersey, whether state funded or 100 per cent fee-paying?

Deputy V. Li:

Yes.

Deputy K.F. Morel:

I thank the Deputy.

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy. Is the amendment seconded? **[Seconded]**

10.3.2 Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning):

I just want to clarify first of all that there are already education statistics published, and have been for a long time. What I am doing is improving what is there a great deal. As noted by the proposer, the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning has committed to publishing exam results for all schools across the Island by 2027. I was surprised by this amendment because it is clearly unnecessary. I can assure the Deputy and all other States Members that this work is already being done. I do not think it is right to accept an amendment that proposes actions which are already in place. Since taking office, I have held many meetings on publication of data, supported by all of the Assistant Ministers, especially Senator Mark Boleat, who is very keen for more publication of data. I may as well read out the comments paper, but I will stress again this work is already being done. To the comments paper: "The new Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning and the Assistant Minister strongly support increased openness and the principle of ensuring that Islanders have access to high-quality, reliable information about educational outcomes and school performance. Progress has already been made, recognising that transparency and accountability are important features of an effective education system. The Department has adopted an Education Data Publication Policy, recently approved by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, which provides a framework for the regular publication of educational data and information." I would like to thank the officers who have worked on this so quickly to produce this. It is just going through its last stages of checking with headteachers and will be published within a week or so. So, the new policy includes Island-wide reporting on schools, pupils and their characteristics, which includes numbers of electively home educated pupils, it includes attendance and absence, it includes educational attainment, and these will be supplemented by detailed school level reports for mainstream Government secondary schools by the end of this year, and primary schools by early next year. "Educational attainment alone does not provide a complete picture of school effectiveness. For this reason, attainment data is considered alongside broader contextual information and findings from Jersey School Reviews." This was a point that we made very strongly that everything must be seen in context.

[16:00]

"The Minister is committed to continuing to enhance the information available to Islanders, and the amendment itself is therefore overly prescriptive in this regard. Enhancements will include the development of destination tracking at a school level from 2027, providing greater insight into progression into further education, higher education, employment and training. This data will be published when the Minister is assured that it is robust and reliable. The amendment also proposes publication requirements that extend beyond Government schools. Implementing such requirements would necessitate amendments to existing grant agreements with grant-aided schools to ensure that the collection, use and publication of relevant data are explicitly permitted. The Minister is committed to progressing discussions to achieve this aim." I would like to see that we can get this information for all the schools on the Island. "In conclusion, the objectives of this amendment are largely already being delivered through work that is under way and agreed within the department, which will deliver improvement in 2026 and beyond. Members are therefore asked to reject the amendment." I would just list the points that will be included. The planned content for further publications in 2026 includes attendance and absence, which will include overall attendance rates; authorised absence; unauthorised absence; persistent absence; severe absence; attendance by school; attendance by year group; attendance by pupil characteristic; reasons for absence and trends over time. For educational attainment we will include early years foundation stage; early learning goals; Key Stage 1 reading, writing and mathematics; Key Stage 2 reading, writing and mathematics; Key Stage 4 G.C.S.E. (General Certificate of Secondary Education) attainment measures; English attainment; mathematics attainment; Jersey 8 figures; Jersey progress; subject-level outcomes post-16; A-level outcomes; applied general qualifications and technical qualifications. We will include schools in numbers: pupil numbers and characteristics; attendance and absence in each school; and

progress measures. Also, another point is the C.S.P. is a summary of the higher strategic priorities. Publication of school data is part of the business-as-usual activity, which is part of the remit of Education and Lifelong Learning. I state again, this amendment is unnecessary, the work is being done, and I ask Members to reject it.

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

I will speak against the amendment, there is no question in my mind, but really I wanted to raise the greater issue, which is it has been very interesting to hear the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning talk about the publications that she would like to make, and I agree that that is not something that is necessary in the Common Strategic Policy. An aim of the department is not an aim of the Government as a whole. But I do question - and I know Senator Boleat has looked into this - whether such publication in an Island where there is no direct free-marketing schools, where schools are, in the main - certainly in the primary section - geographically located and people who attend them tend to be according to where they live rather than necessarily their choice, that there is the potential for division created by such league tables, and that data, particularly in primary schools, will just reflect the socioeconomic demographics of the area in which they are located, rather than telling us much about the attainment of the school or the culture in the school itself. I just want to read again, on record, my concern that what is seen as a benefit to Islanders, and I can understand freedom of information - I do understand that - but we do not have a free market in schools in Jersey and therefore I do question whether such publication will come to harm us rather than help us.

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

For someone who almost lost their voice on Sunday I have said enough already, so I will keep it short. Earlier it was asked why the Council of Ministers had differing reactions to amendments where actions are already underway, and I think Deputy Li's amendment fits in this category. If Deputy Li makes a recommendation about education I think the Council of Ministers should listen. Her depth of knowledge is already legendry, and we are very fortunate to have it available. If she says the data is valuable, I imagine it is. I will be supporting her amendment.

10.3.5 Senator Sir M.J. Boleat:

Obviously, I support what the Minister has said. Before becoming a Member of the Assembly, I was critical of the absence of data on education, and I have been incredibly impressed by the approach of the Minister, the Assistant Ministers and indeed the executives to tackling this problem. I think the Deputy has just raised a really important point about comparability. What has happened in the past has been somewhere between unacceptable and disgraceful; producing reports that observe that selective schools get better absolute results than the schools they take pupils from is really unhelpful, and that, frankly, is what was done. It is really important when data is published that it is as accurate and meaningful as possible and, where comparisons are made, that they are done on a fair basis. That is exactly what is planned. I particularly agree that the publication of data does not count as a strategic policy. I agree entirely with the intent behind the amendment, and I think we all agree on that. But it is also unnecessarily prescriptive. I can assure the Member that there is an absolute commitment to publish meaningful data on education, and I agree with everything that the Minister said on this point. I urge the Assembly to reject the amendment.

10.3.6 Connétable I. Gardiner of St. Helier:

I assume nobody is surprised that I am speaking on this amendment. I understand why the Council of Ministers might reject part A, because part A is adding extra priority, and I understand we have a priority I can see, and I am really grateful for Deputy Li that she is taking voting in 2 parts. The part A we can discuss. Part B is critical, and I would like to ask Deputy Li if she heard before lodging this amendment the list that has been presented by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning? It might be yes, it might be no, but let us start with the list. Deputy Li was prescriptive, and a lot of

debates in this Assembly when it has come to education, people are just shouting out: "It is too much data; it is too many things; we are not understanding; we are not getting involved with all this data about education." The data about education the Minister has published - by the way, thank you for the Minister, I think it is really important data - but the data does not include N.E.E.T, not in employment and education, which is important to understand where young people are staying. It does not include more to year trends along with attendance, which is important. To make a real decision, we need to see the trends. I agree with Deputy Morel, the data might be really difficult to see, because it is likely that we will see some data which depends on the postcode. Likely when we see data on the grant schools it will be different from the state school, but this is the reality that we need to face and is something that a strategic decision needs to be taken here at the Assembly to ensure that we have quality within education. It is really important to understand how children progress through the school who are struggling, who need help to take it to the next step. Interestingly enough, BBC Jersey, just last year, reported that a member of the public needed to go to freedom of information - that we want to save money from the freedom of information - to obtain G.C.S.E. results. I think families should have straightforward results for G.C.S.E.

The Bailiff:

Are you prepared to give way to a point of clarification from the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning?

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thank you. It was just about the comment about not any information about N.E.E.T.'s when I had already highlighted the destination tracking.

The Connétable of St. Helier:

There is information going in all different directions, and what Deputy Li is saying is we need information in one place, very straightforward, that we can compare, because not everyone is going to different reports. There is lots of information around various websites, but it is not in the one place to track the trends. As a former Minister for Education, I know the examination results alone cannot tell us everything about a school or child progress. We must understand the context, as the Minister says. I agree with her about it. Multi-year trends, particularly on a small island where there are fewer pupils, significantly can change results. Attendance, everything that has been taught is important, but we do have more and more children going to home education. Do we know the results about the home education and how they are doing? Publication must protect children's privacy, but we are talking about big numbers. We need reliable information and the main proposition, the Common Strategic Policy recognised consistently how important the evidence base is, and for me, it is action 5.3 to be added, which applies in principle across all education. Behind every figure there is a child and there are opportunities. This action can help us celebrate. For example, G.C.S.E. results last year, everyone was surprised how Haute Vallée and Grainville did well. So, it is not just showing negatives, it can show the positive. This is why I believe it is nothing to hide. The more relevant information published in one place can support, and this is why I will be supporting the second part of the amendment.

The Bailiff:

Does anyone else wish to speak on this amendment? If no one else wishes to speak, I call upon Deputy Li to reply.

10.3.7 Deputy V. Li:

As a newcomer, I really appreciate sometimes Deputy Morel gives me the challenge or the questions, because I feel like I did not expect that. I had no idea what I am going to do, who I am going to address. So, apologies if I behave a bit clumsy, and I hope next year I will do better. I thank Deputy Rebindaine's endorsement and the Connétable of St. Helier to again summarise and also bring her personal experience, and her experience as Minister for Education, and her knowledge into it. I really appreciate Deputy Curtis, the current Minister, and also Senator Boleat's comments about it. What I am trying to, again, really draw everyone's attention to is that the Minister said that this work is underway, and I am not asking anyone to do anything different. I am asking to have this Assembly stand behind this because learning is important. How we measure how we are doing right now with the students learning is important, is critical. What is not committed right now is the outcome from the grant-aided schools. The reason why I mentioned that there is because they receive public money at 47 per cent per pupil rate for the second pupils, so we still need to see what value has been added into our education system. Also, I said this is not to create the league table, because it is, again, how the data is presented. It is for the Minister and for the department. Again, prescriptive, it says what the Islanders should be able to see, not how the department does it. Method, timing and safeguards stay with the Minister. I thank again for all the Members that contributed to this debate. If I may ask for the amendment to be taken in 2 parts, part A and part B. I call for the appel.

The Bailiff:

The appel has been called for. Members are invited to return to their seats. The vote is being taken in 2 parts.

[16:15]

The first part of the amendment we will take first, and I invite the Greffier to open the voting. If all Members have had the opportunity of casting of their votes, I ask the Greffier to close the voting. I announce that part A has been rejected:

POUR: 14		**CONTRE: 33**		**ABSTAINED: 0**
Connétable of Grouville		Senator L.J. Farnham		
Connétable of St. Lawrence		Senator I.J. Gorst		
Deputy M. Tadier		Senator A. Maclean		
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet		Senator M.R. Le Hegarat		
Deputy C.S. Alves		Senator T.J.A. Binet		
Deputy T.A. Coles		Senator H.M. Miles		
Deputy A.F. Curtis		Senator M.E. Millar		
Deputy L.V. Feltham		Senator Sir M.J. Boleat		
Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée		Senator S. Kersten		
Deputy B. Ward		Connétable of St. Mary		
Deputy L. Carpenter		Connétable of St. Martin		
Deputy C. Leck		Connétable of St. Peter		
Deputy V. Li		Connétable of St. Brelade		
Deputy C. Rebindaine		Connétable of St. Helier		
		Connétable of St. John		
		Connétable of St. Clement		
		Connétable of St. Ouen		

		Connétable of Trinity		
		Connétable of St. Saviour		
		Deputy K.F. Morel		
		Deputy G. Voisin		
		Deputy M.B. Andrews		
		Deputy R.E. Binet		
		Deputy C.D. Curtis		
		Deputy M.R. Ferey		
		Deputy H.L. Jeune		
		Deputy J. Renouf		
		Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson		
		Deputy K.M. Wilson		
		Deputy S. Gleave		
		Deputy R. Parker		
		Deputy G. Raimondo		
		Deputy Philip Josue Romeril		

The Bailiff:

I will move on to the second part of the amendment. I ask the Greffier to open the voting. If all Members have had the opportunity of casting of their votes, I ask the Greffier to close the voting. I can announce the second part has been rejected:

POUR: 18		**CONTRE: 29**		**ABSTAINED: 0**
Connétable of St. Martin		Senator L.J. Farnham		
Connétable of St. Helier		Senator I.J. Gorst		
Connétable of Grouville		Senator A. Maclean		
Connétable of St. Saviour		Senator M.R. Le Hegarat		
Connétable of St. Lawrence		Senator T.J.A. Binet		
Deputy M. Tadier		Senator H.M. Miles		
Deputy C.S. Alves		Senator M.E. Millar		
Deputy M.B. Andrews		Senator Sir M.J. Boleat		
Deputy T.A. Coles		Senator S. Kersten		
Deputy A.F. Curtis		Connétable of St. Mary		
Deputy L.V. Feltham		Connétable of St. Peter		
Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée		Connétable of St. Brelade		
Deputy B. Ward		Connétable of St. John		
Deputy L. Carpenter		Connétable of St. Clement		
Deputy C. Leck		Connétable of St. Ouen		

Deputy V. Li		Connétable of Trinity		
Deputy G. Raimondo		Deputy L.M.C. Doublet		
Deputy C. Rebindaine		Deputy K.F. Morel		
		Deputy G. Voisin		
		Deputy R.E. Binet		
		Deputy C.D. Curtis		
		Deputy M.R. Ferey		
		Deputy H.L. Jeune		
		Deputy J. Renouf		
		Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson		
		Deputy K.M. Wilson		
		Deputy S. Gleave		
		Deputy R. Parker		
		Deputy Philip Josue Romeril		

10.4 Common Strategic Policy 2026 – 2030 (P.75/2026): twenty-fourth amendment (P.75/2026 Amd.(24)) - Remove the provision for more homes

The Bailiff:

We now move onto the twenty-fourth amendment, lodged by Deputy Alex Curtis. I ask the Greffier to read the amendment.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

Page 2 – After the words "report accompanying this Proposition" insert the words – ", except that on pages 5 and 13 of the report the words "Provide more homes and" should be deleted from Priority 6. and the word "upgrade" capitalised, and on page 13 – (a) 6.1 should be deleted and the subsequent paragraphs redesignated accordingly; (b) after the words "accelerate investment in the infrastructure" the word ", homes" should be deleted; and (c) the bullet point "Deliver more homes" should be deleted".

The Bailiff:

I invite Deputy Alex Curtis to propose the amendment.

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

It is always hard sometimes to hear the amendment read out, so for the avoidance of doubt for Members, this amendment simply deletes the priority that the Government should deliver more homes. I have brought this as I do not believe that the evidence exists that the Government should make the delivery of more homes their priority. This does not mean that I feel we should not see more homes delivered in this Assembly term, but that it should not be a key focus of the public sector. To be clear, it retains the delivery of infrastructure that supports existing and new housing should still be a priority. Before going any further, I think it is worthwhile being clear on what the C.S.P. says, and then what the Council of Ministers considers this means. Priority 6 of the C.S.P. is titled: "Provide more homes and upgrade core infrastructure that Islanders rely on." Action 6.1 states: "Enable housing development to provide more homes for Islanders and assisted purchase schemes", though I have not quite figured out how we deliver housing development and more homes to assisted purchase schemes. The narrative states in paragraph one: "We will accelerate investment in the

infrastructure and homes." Later, it goes on and says: "We will continue the Investing in Jersey programme focusing capital investment on a range of things including homes." Then, in the bullet points, it says: "Deliver more homes." So, what does it mean for the C.S.P. to include the provisions for "provide more homes" and "deliver more homes"? Well, the Government appears to consider it means enabling more housing delivery in the Island, but also fundamentally that it is a priority of the Government and its States-owned entities - we are thinking S.o.J.D.C. and Andium Homes - to build more homes. We know that because a comment on amendment 7 where the Council of Ministers state: "In action 6.1 the Common Strategic Policy includes a clear commitment to providing more homes to Islanders through increased housing supply and support Islanders into home ownership through assisted purchase." To be clear again, this amendment does not remove the fact that investment in core infrastructure will enable more home delivery, such as our sewage network, but it does seek to remove the fact that building new homes should be a priority for the next 4 years. To work out why I brought this, I think it is worth taking a step back and asking the basic question: do we need more homes? The answer to this for me for decades now has always been yes. The number of houses in Jersey has only ever risen in the recent past. This has occurred in the context of 2 changes: one, a smaller average household size; and 2, perhaps a more pressing one, a growing population. In 1971, the population of Jersey was around 69,000; in 1981, 76,000; in 2001, 87,000; and in 2021, as we know, just over 103,000. In this time Jersey has continued to build, but we no longer live in an Island where our population continues to grow. Importantly, I would ask Members, what is absent in the C.S.P. is, do we want to live in an Island that continues to grow in its population size? So, without an increasing population and with household sizes tapering down more slowly, we have reached a point where, broadly speaking, the supply of homes meets demand. We know this because Statistics Jersey model future housing need, and I have included the data on this in my report. With net-nil migration, we are in a surplus of housing by 2035, and if we take the view of +325, the only last agreed formal figure, we only need 140 new homes per year up to 2040. This is a step change lower requirement to previous years and the previous supply of new homes. Unless Jersey plans to increase its population rapidly, the provision of new homes can easily be provided by regular development, such as we see in the private sector. Work on empty homes can also ensure empty and existing stock is best utilised. The Government, in their comments paper, say they must retain flexibility to deliver a pipeline of new housing, despite the evidence we do not need a large supply. They reference migration and demographic change, but they put no policy down on migration to assert this, despite it being something in previous C.S.P.'s. We also heard in Oral Questions today that not including something in the C.S.P. does not preclude its delivery should circumstances change. Turning back to the impact following the Government's current position, they, through their States-owned entities, commit to build more and accelerate the delivery of homes. On its own, the delivery of new homes sounds like it can only be positive for Islanders. More supply can only be better, right? I would say wrong. We know that the delivery of homes does come at a cost to this Island in a few ways. Firstly, committing that delivery to be through our States-owned entities requires them to increase their borrowing to fund projects. Notwithstanding we expect them to meet viability tests, increasing the States-group borrowing liabilities in a concentrated sector is not necessarily something we want to do. Secondly, and it is obvious, housing must be created somewhere. Increasing density in St. Helier changed the type and shape of homes, and our capital. Alternatively, providing houses with gardens, that I would say most aspire to for their long-term housing needs, requires development across the Island. Where we have seen this delivered on a larger scale is through the rezoning of fields. This comes with impacts, such to traffic and community. As I detail in my report, the delivery of new homes should be separated from the challenge of housing affordability. Simply building new homes will not make cheaper houses. Construction costs can be in excess of £4,600 per metre squared, before you consider land and other development costs. Further, there is no need to keep the reference to assisted purchase schemes in the C.S.P., and I feel we will debate this twice, but we have heard from the Government that there is no clear direction on this. They simply want to keep the option on the table. If that is the case, why

lock themselves into the C.S.P. too soon as the delivery of choice? We have seen the C.S.P. already, the Government's acceptance of the removal of St. Helier as a campus site for Highlands. They are not concerned it means they cannot deliver it there, but they agreed with me on that, that they should not put the cart before the horse on policy options. There are other good reasons to remove the Government's focus on building homes. Andium has had a significant building programme over the past 6 years. It has increased supplies of homes to rent and to buy. Should it continue at the large rate it has been going to date? The Government's conclusion in their comments to me are telling. They say, and I will quote: "In summary, housing affordability, access to home ownership and access to suitable housing remain major concerns for many Islanders, who would expect Ministers to maintain a focus on enabling housing delivery, as set out in Priority 6 ... It remains the case that the Island needs to continue to work towards reaching a balance between changing supply and demand in the housing market in order to support a good quality of life." Despite that being the summary, the Government have failed to identify that demand exceeds built supply by any margin, nor that building homes can deliver affordable homes, or that assisted purchase schemes deliver the policy outcome of affordable homes. There was a sentence in there I want to focus on. I do not think Islanders expect Ministers to maintain a focus on enabling housing delivery. Islanders just want to afford a home full stop, ideally with a choice of homes, from rural, terraced to apartment, from old stock to newer stock. They want a house to be in reach of their own income, without having to approach the States for shared equity schemes. But I think this ambition is hard to square as it means our existing housing stock should be affordable as well. That may mean that house prices need to drop, at least in real terms, over time. Simply promising to build more homes and offering assisted purchase schemes tries to patch this up without dealing with the underlying systemic issues of our housing market. I believe it would be more strategic to look at housing through this lens. I hope Members can agree that we should not prioritise as strongly as this Government has in the C.S.P. the building of new homes. A Government can only prioritise so much in a 4-year term. The delivery of new houses has featured in C.S.P.'s before, but we are not in times of before where we thought housing demand outstripped supply. Jersey cannot keep growing, and building new homes does not need to be the Government's focus for the next 4 years. Of course, to quote the Chief Minister in opening this C.S.P. debate: "Focus matters." I make the amendment.

The Bailiff:

Is the amendment seconded? **[Seconded]**

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

I understand the concerns that Deputy Alex Curtis has raised through this amendment. He invites us to reconsider whether providing more homes should remain a strategic priority in light of more recent housing projections, and to question the role that Government should play in housing delivery. These are legitimate questions and Ministers agree that housing policy should always be informed by the latest available evidence. However, having considered the argument put forward, Ministers do not support the amendment. Recent housing projections do suggest a lower level of future housing need than was previously forecast. That is welcome. It reflects the significant amount of housing that has been delivered in recent years and demonstrates the value of taking a long-term approach to housing policy. It reflects the many years of sustained investment in housing, particularly the work undertaken by Andium Homes over more than a decade, alongside the contribution of our other housing providers and the private sector. Indeed, the evidence cited by the amendment demonstrates the value of maintaining a sustained focus on being an enabler for housing delivery, rather than an argument for stepping back from it. Ministers do not accept the conclusion that enabling housing delivery should, therefore, cease to be a strategic priority for Government. For most Islanders the question is not whether a projection shows a future surplus or deficit of homes, it is whether they can find a suitable home, whether they can afford it, and whether home ownership remains within reach. Those challenges have not disappeared.

[16:30]

Housing affordability remains one of the most significant pressures faced by many households. Young people continue to face barriers to entering homeownership. Families often struggle to find homes that meet their needs. This debate is, therefore, no longer simply about how many homes Jersey needs; increasingly it is about whether we are providing the right homes of the right size and tenure in the right locations, and whether people can move through the housing system as their circumstances change. A well-functioning housing market should support young Islanders entering homeownership, families moving into homes, and meet the needs of older Islanders who wish to downsize. Housing mobility matters just as much as overall housing numbers. Members should also recognise that housing projections are not fixed predictors, they are influenced by migration, demographics, household formation, and wider economic conditions. A Common Strategic Policy will guide Government actively over the next 4 years. It would not be prudent to remove housing delivery as a strategic priority based on today's projections alone. Equally, retaining that priority does not commit Government to building homes regardless of need. The amendment also proposes removing reference to assisted purchase schemes. Ministers do not believe this is necessary. Assisted purchase schemes are not the only way of supporting access to homeownership, but they remain an established policy tool to help Islanders particularly to purchase a home who might otherwise not be able to do so. Retaining reference to assisted purchase schemes does not commit the Government to any particular schemes or level of investment, it simply preserves the ability to consider such measures where they are justified and appropriate. Ultimately, at a time when many Islanders continue to face cost-of-living pressures, when many young people still question whether they will be able to own their own homes, and when access to suitable housing remains a challenge for many families, now is not the moment to signal that housing delivery is no longer a strategic priority for Government. The Council of Ministers believes the Common Strategic Policy strikes the right balance and Members are, therefore, asked not to support the amendment.

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

I will not be supporting this amendment. I understand the point Deputy Curtis is making, but I think we are in danger of overlooking a problem that is staring us in the face. He has too narrow a view of what homes we need. Jersey's overall population may not be growing but our elderly population is, and significantly. Adapting existing homes is simply not going to cut the mustard. We need proper supported living, and these are homes; not somewhere to shut our elderly away but somewhere people can make a positive, proactive decision to downsize to, retain their independence, enjoy a community, and live well for longer. We have precious little of that in Jersey today. A couple of pale imitations perhaps but nothing approaching the scale and the ambition that we need. I had a very constructive meeting with the Minister for Housing yesterday, and I was encouraged by his response. I would urge us not to take the very narrow definition of what we mean by "homes". It not just about how many homes we need but what kind of homes we need. We need to build more homes but we need to build the right homes. We need to make sure we have places where people can downsize to, and we need to make sure that we are not just shutting our elderly away somewhere. That is why I cannot support this amendment.

10.4.4 Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John:

Knowing the Deputy as I do, I am sure he has brought this amendment with very good intent. Unfortunately what this amendment does not do is to provide encouragement to couples to either start a family or indeed increase the size of their families. I do hope that this Council of Ministers will be able to resolve the perceived battle we currently have with no less than 3 A.L.O.s (arm's length organisation) all seeing themselves as housing developers, and 2 wanting to sell properties on the open market in competition with the private sector. One of the hardest things I have had to do in my career was to allocate homes in a new development just a couple of years ago. There was clear demand for the 16 homes. There was, however, huge disappointment for many who do not have

children, and perhaps some who could not have children. From a list of over 200 people we were only able to allocate 8 of these beautiful homes. Clearly affordability is a big issue. The development I refer to is a shared equity model where the housing association that I chair retained 27 per cent of the equity and, importantly, should keep these homes as affordable in perpetuity. To qualify through the current Housing Gateway for one of the homes you had to have a dependent under 18 years-old. That took more than 50 per cent of those who had an aspiration for one of these homes to fall by the wayside. The current Housing Gateway is a real issue and has a genuine impact on young, and perhaps not so young, Islanders who find themselves debating whether they should stay or go. They may have aspirations of starting a family, or indeed they may already have a family that they want to extend. Creating more suitable homes - be that affordable and/or right-sized - has to remain a priority for us all. Having too many one-bedroom flats does not mean that there is not demand for 2 and 3-bedroom homes. As a previous speaker outlined, people also want to right-size. People want to remain or return to communities where their families are, where they are close to services and, in many cases, close to a decent bus service. We do have an ageing demographic and we need to ensure that people enter work. To attract people to work here we are going to have to home them. There are certainly many challenges on anyone wanting to create homes - especially shared equity or social rented properties, in the current climate - but I would respectfully suggest that Members vote against this amendment.

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

I have enormous sympathy with Deputy Curtis's amendment because, quite simply, for the 8 years I have been in this Assembly we have not really changed our view on housing in Jersey. The fact that we have a housing dilemma in the Island - and it has been here for at least the last 10, if not 20 years - shows me that the Government approach has been incorrect over the many years. I do share the concern that the Deputy highlights in his amendment that the wording of the Common Strategic Policy will just be about building homes, irrespective of what type. So I am not as concerned as Deputy Gleave is with Deputy Curtis's narrow view, as she sees it; I am concerned about the Government's narrow view and the housing providers' narrow view of what homes are in Jersey. That is where my concern lies. But I have to say, I was very pleased to hear the Minister for Housing talk about the need for housing mobility and the need to be able to move through different stages of your life and have appropriate housing. That spoke to exactly what I stood for in the election, and I had that written down front and centre in a manifesto about the need for right-size housing in this Island. But it is something which the Government, Andium, States of Jersey Development Company and others have not dealt with over years. So I do understand where Deputy Curtis is coming from because too often it has been too easy to say: "We just need to build family homes." No, we just need to build the homes that free up family houses because we have plenty of family homes in Jersey. If we are to protect the countryside ... and, yes, I represent a primarily rural district in the Island, the countryside is a common good and whether you live in St. Helier or live in St. Ouen, the countryside is there for everybody to enjoy. It must be protected if we are to maintain the character, beauty and attraction of this Island. I will be supporting the Minister for Housing's view that we should reject this amendment, but I do so knowing that I will be looking to the Minister for Housing to make sure that it is the right kind of homes we are building in this Island, and that we do not fall back on the cheap clichés of: "We just need family homes, somewhere with a garden in the countryside" destroying our countryside and not solving the housing problem. I know that the Minister for Housing has the data at his fingertips to be able to make those decisions and make sure that our housing providers are building the right kinds of homes in the right places. That is what is needed. It is because we do still need homes in Jersey - but of a particular type - that I will reject the amendment in this case. But Deputy Curtis is raising a really very fundamentally important issue, which we, as an Assembly, must hold the Government to account on, which is the right type of homes need to be built, not just any homes to tick some boxes on a checklist. That is my opinion on this,

and so I do ask the States Assembly to reject the amendment, but to hold the Government to account on making sure we build the right types of homes.

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

Leading on from the last speaker, I have one simple question for the Deputy who proposed the proposition, which is to what extent does he think that the Planning Committee itself has leverage over the approval of homes and the right kind of homes. To what extent does he believe that the Common Strategic Policy inhibits such discretion that the Committee has?

The Bailiff:

Does anyone else wish to speak on this amendment? If no one else wishes to speak I call upon Deputy Curtis to reply.

10.4.7 Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I will start in reverse with the Constable of St. Mary, who references the Planning Committee and its role. I should say, as Chair of the Planning Committee, as I trust all members do and continue to do, we assess applications in the merits of the policy at the time. We set aside our political views, which has led me to making a lot of decisions that I disagree with personally, on the basis of good decision making. He asks, could we direct what kind of housing there is, and I think there is a greater position for the Committee and for Ministers to make in defining appropriate housing. Indeed, a housing mix is one of the policies within the Bridging Island Plan that requires an assessment of the suitable housing mix. He will know from when we sat on the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel together, I pushed the former Minister for Housing on his work, or lack thereof, with the then Minister for the Environment, on defining that to provide an appropriate guidance to the Committee to follow. In some ways we have been left where we are - and this starts to touch on Deputy Gleave and Deputy Morel's points - because we have failed to provide the guidance as to where homes should be delivered and what type of home are we providing. Deputy Gleave, I will say, says "too narrow a view". I am more than familiar with supported living arrangements being applied for, and being supported. In fact, I have supported applications developing them in St. Saviour on the Samuel Le Riche site, which provides for kind of a care village model, which she will no doubt with her interest in this area be aware I believe is under development. My view would be that is an interesting one. If Deputy Gleave really thinks that the focus on housing is specifically on the cared housing, supported accommodation and living, it may have been a good amendment to this Budget. It provides a policy direction as to why we need housing. I think we can all agree we do not have care villages in the Island. To that extent that she considers and she is raising the questions, that is not what we were debating. We did not get a pitch with a direction. We get - as Deputy Morel I think suggests, without going as far as wanting to support me - a rudderless direction to build, build, build. Ministers and Members who think: "Well, it is not a build, build, build", the C.S.P. suggests that we will accelerate the delivery of homes. The Minister for Housing has said he has couched this very ambitious plan of building homes with: "We will build homes (if we need them)." The C.S.P. does not say that. Now, we will debate a very good amendment by the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel later that inserts an evidence-based need for homes and suitable homes. But we are not debating that now, we are debating a rather raw model of housing: "Let us deliver more, let us give more homes." I would say back, I have not heard a speech yet that suggests building homes delivers any policy objective that has been identified, beyond perhaps a targeted delivery of care villages should that be the model of assisted living our elders want in older age.

[16:45]

I would say to the Constable of St. John, what do I say to the younger family? Well, dare I say I sit in that closer bracket than he does and I look at the market and I do not think ... **[Laughter]** I had far more vigour in saying that before Deputy Raimondo joined, and I feel quite old in comparison

now. But in all seriousness, what I say is what Island do you want to live on? I want to live on an Island that values what housing can provide to what most people within a bracket up to perhaps supported living want. A lot of them want outdoor space. They want a simple life. They want to be able to host a barbecue in the summer or drink their coffee outside in the morning. I would say that the costs of delivering new housing come with the fact that housing is going to be lived in. He referenced this when he said: "Well, we want people to come and work here and we need to home them." That is a rather wonderful way to dance around the topic that we might need to increase our population to maintain a working population. I would go back and say that the fact that is absent in the C.S.P. highlights perhaps an uncomfortable conversation the Council of Ministers do not want to have at this time. The cynic in me says if the Council of Ministers say: "Deliver more homes, build more homes" it is because they want a bigger population. If it is that, I think they should say that. If it is not, maybe the policy direction will be different. When I drafted and wrote this I think it is fair to say I knew I was on to a losing battle. With my odds on this one I would not have taken a bet against myself to win this one, unless Members feel very sympathetic today. But I think what I have highlighted in this debate is we have in some ways a gross lack of consideration as to where we are going. Deputy Rebindaine said: "We are going somewhere." I think the housing conversation we need to build starts with: "Where are we going? What housing do we need in 2050? 2100?" It is with that lens I often approach thinking about the sustainable decisions that the Planning Committee and the system beyond the Committee have to make. I do not see that long-term vision in front of me and I think carting us closer towards an unsustainable position, more housing, greater density of St. Helier, is a dangerous place to be. I think 4 years to take our foot off the gas in housing delivery to focus on the other policies that need to be delivered by the Government would be a more prudent use of time, and especially given the discussion of assisted purchase product, a more prudent way to spend our money. We need to square up against the realities of our housing challenges and simply suggesting the solution is to build more I think will be proven to be the wrong way to do it. With that I call, hopefully, willingly for the appel and look for support from my fellow Members.

The Connétable of St. John:

Sir, a point of clarification, if I may?

The Bailiff:

Are you prepared to give way for a point of clarification?

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Go on.

The Bailiff:

Is that a yes or a no?

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Yes, Sir.

The Connétable of St. John:

Would the Deputy agree that I was young once? **[Laughter]**

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Unfortunately, sir, I was not there to see it. **[Laughter]**

The Bailiff:

The appel has been called for and 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. I can announce the amendment has been rejected:

POUR: 8		**CONTRE: 39**		**ABSTAINED: 0**
Connétable of St. Ouen		Senator L.J. Farnham		
Connétable of Grouville		Senator I.J. Gorst		
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet		Senator A. Maclean		
Deputy A.F. Curtis		Senator M.R. Le Hegarat		
Deputy B. Ward		Senator T.J.A. Binet		
Deputy V. Li		Senator H.M. Miles		
Deputy G. Raimondo		Senator M.E. Millar		
Deputy C. Rebindaine		Senator Sir M.J. Boleat		
		Senator S. Kersten		
		Connétable of St. Mary		
		Connétable of St. Martin		
		Connétable of St. Peter		
		Connétable of St. Brelade		
		Connétable of St. Helier		
		Connétable of St. John		
		Connétable of St. Clement		
		Connétable of Trinity		
		Connétable of St. Saviour		
		Connétable of St. Lawrence		
		Deputy M. Tadier		
		Deputy C.S. Alves		
		Deputy K.F. Morel		
		Deputy G. Voisin		
		Deputy M.B. Andrews		
		Deputy R.E. Binet		
		Deputy T.A. Coles		
		Deputy C.D. Curtis		
		Deputy L.V. Feltham		
		Deputy M.R. Ferey		
		Deputy H.L. Jeune		
		Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée		
		Deputy J. Renouf		
		Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson		
		Deputy K.M. Wilson		
		Deputy L. Carpenter		
		Deputy S. Gleave		

		Deputy C. Leck		
		Deputy R. Parker		
		Deputy Philip Josue Romeril		

10.5 Common Strategic Policy 2026 - 2030 (P.75/2026): twelfth amendment (P.75/2026 Amd.(12)) - Increase Government transparency, openness and accountability

The Bailiff:

The twelfth amendment has been lodged by Deputy Alves, and I ask the Greffier to read the amendment.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

1. Page 2 - After the words "report accompanying this Proposition" insert the words - ", except that, on Page 5, after Priority 11 there should be inserted the following new Priority within the summary table of priorities - 12. Increase Government transparency, openness and accountability, proactively support civic and democratic engagement and participation, and strengthen public trust in Jersey's democratic institutions." 2. Page 2 - After the words "report accompanying this Proposition" insert the words - ", except that, on Page 19, after Priority 11, there should be inserted the following Priority - '12. Increase Government transparency, openness and accountability, proactively support civic and democratic engagement and participation, and strengthen public trust in Jersey's democratic institutions. Actions: 12.1 Improve transparency of decision-making across Government departments, including through the publication of clearer and more accessible information on policy development, delivery and performance data. 12.2 Make Government processes, consultations and public information easier to access and understand, allowing Islanders to engage more confidently with decisions that affect their lives, and monitor public trust through regular surveys to help drive continuous improvement in transparency, accountability and public engagement. 12.3 Commit to the sustained integration of democratic and political education throughout the school curriculum, and support and promote the work of the States Greffe in enhancing and expanding democratic and political education, outreach, public engagement, and civic participation programs and initiatives along with relevant departments and stakeholders, including the Parishes. 12.4 Ensure the long-term support, technical upkeep, and funding of the Automatic Voter Registration (A.V.R.) system, working collaboratively with the Parishes, the Judicial Greffe, and relevant departments to maintain accurate, secure, and modern electoral data. A healthy democracy depends on people understanding how decisions are made, feeling able to participate, and having confidence that Government is acting openly and responsibly. While trust in public services has increased in the last year, many Islanders still feel disconnected from democratic and political processes or are unsure about how to engage with them. Members of the public can often be left frustrated by complex, unclear communication or a lack of accessible information. If we want people to have confidence in our institutions, we must ensure Government is transparent, approachable and accountable. We will improve the way Government communicates by providing clearer information about how policies are developed, how decisions are taken and what outcomes are being achieved. Islanders should not have to navigate complicated systems to understand what Government is doing or how decisions affect them. Information should be accessible, timely and easy to find. We also recognise the importance of listening. Regular surveys and feedback mechanisms will help us understand public perceptions, identify areas for improvement and ensure Government remains responsive to the communities it serves. We will continue to support democratic, civic, and political education and engagement initiatives, working with the States Greffe and partner organisations to help people better understand how Jersey's democratic system operates and how they can get involved. Greater awareness leads to

greater participation, and stronger participation strengthens our democracy. Sustaining a modern electoral infrastructure is vital to enhancing civil participation. Following the successful delivery of the Automatic Voter Registration (A.V.R.) system, the Government remains committed to its long-term viability and technical support. We will work in close partnership with the Parishes, the Judicial Greffe, and data-holding departments to ensure that voter data remains accurate, secure, and seamless, safeguarding an inclusive democratic process for all Islanders. By improving Government transparency and access to information, we can strengthen accountability and ensure Islanders feel informed, empowered and connected to the decisions that shape Jersey's future.'"

The Bailiff:

Thank you, Greffier. I ask Deputy Alves to propose the amendment.

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

It seemed a lot shorter when I was writing it. **[Laughter]** When I first read through this C.S.P. I was struck by how little it says about accountability, transparency and openness. When the Chief Minister took office he recognised the importance of this. He rightly said that Islanders expect Government to be efficient, responsive and transparent. When I looked further I realised there was also no mention of encouraging or supporting democratic engagement. In Statistic Jersey's comparison of the O.E.C.D. (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries, our Island ranks among the lowest for civic engagement. That is something we should be embarrassed about and working fiercely together to improve. It is also the very thing without which none of us would be here today. We are living in an era where authenticity is challenged, engagement is lacking, and trust is in short supply. We owe it to the public to have a Government that is committed to transparency, openness and accountability, and this is why I rise today to propose adding a 12th priority to the C.S.P. So let us start with a positive. The Council of Ministers' comments say they fully endorse the principles behind this amendment. A full endorsement in this Assembly is a rare thing so I am going to enjoy it while I can, if only briefly. I think I can confidently say that nobody is arguing against these principles. What we are arguing about is whether to write them down in the very document that sets out what this Government will be held to over the next 4 years, or whether we trust that it will just happen anyway. I ask, where is the explicit commitment to democratic foundations that allow every C.S.P. priority to be developed, scrutinised, delivered and held to account? Where is the commitment to ensuring that Islanders can understand what their elected Government is doing, why it is doing it, how decisions are being made, and whether those decisions are delivering what has been promised? Where is the commitment to ensuring that people feel able to participate in decisions that affect their lives? These are not side issues, they are essential to how Government should operate, and I do not believe they should be left as an assumed consequence of doing everything else. There is a fundamental difference between agreeing with a principle and making a commitment to deliver it, and this is what this amendment is about. I do not wish to repeat anything that is already in my report so I will focus on the Council of Ministers' comments addressing each concern. The first, the Government's argument that a separate strategic priority is neither necessary nor proportionate. The comments suggest that transparency, accountability and public engagement should simply inform and underpin the delivery of all the existing priorities. I agree. They absolutely should. However, I have sat in this Assembly long enough to know what happens to principles and values that belong to everyone; they end up belonging to no one. Let us look at a real-life example. The recent findings of our own Information Commissioner. This summer in the annual report on freedom of information the Commissioner highlighted persistent delays, inadequate searches, and exemptions applied incorrectly or too broadly across public authorities. Then in September the Commissioner overturned a Government decision to treat P.F.A.S. (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances)-related requests as vexatious and said that he knew of no legal basis on which the central F.O.I. (Freedom of Information) Unit could control or influence how departments meet their obligations. I acknowledge that Government have communicated a desire to improve, but

these cases prove a vital point; having a freedom of information framework on paper does not guarantee an open culture. The Council's comments point to those very arrangements as the reason a new priority is not needed. If the arrangements were not enough the Commissioner would not have had to have said this. Islanders expect a culture that welcomes scrutiny, not one of defensiveness or resistance. The comments also list open data and public consultations among the existing mechanisms, but having a mechanism is not the same as it working effectively. Another example is the open data initiative. Publishing large, unedited Excel spreadsheet files satisfies a technical compliance element but it fails the public test. If an Islander cannot easily extract meaningful information without a specialised set of skills, transparency has not been achieved. Priority 12 directs departments to focus on their audience, not just on publishing data for the sake of publishing. Similarly, consultations should not simply be measured by whether they have taken place. We should be asking who has participated, whether the process has been accessible, whether a representative range of voices have been heard and, above all, whether people can see how their contributions have been taken forward an into account. This is not about creating additional bureaucracy, it is about making existing processes more meaningful, treating public engagement as a real part of good decision-making, rather than a procedural exercise. When transparency is treated as a chore instead of a core cultural commitment public trust is eroded. The second issue is the suggestion that promoting democratic engagement is a matter that sits solely with the Privileges and Procedures Committee. I think I am quite experienced on this matter. I speak as somebody who has served on P.P.C. continuously since 2018, and who founded its Political Awareness and Education Sub-Committee. I know the work that P.P.C. does, and I am extremely proud of it. But I also know where its limits are and where it reaches its end. When the comments say that "this is a shared responsibility with the Privileges and Procedures Committee", I agree. But a shared responsibility needs 2 parties who are both holding something, and when the comments close by committing Ministers to assisting P.P.C. wherever possible - although I thoroughly welcome this - I respond by saying assisting is not the same as committing. I would never propose that Government should take over the responsibilities of P.P.C. It would be highly inappropriate. Or that the work of the States Greffe should be duplicated. However, I think the Government's response misses an important distinction: the reality of cross-Government impact. Embedding political literacy, for example, across the school curriculum requires active collaborative policy alignment with the Education Department. It must be sustained, supported, and built into the way we prepare future generations to take part in our Island's democracy. That action belongs and sits with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, not a committee of this Assembly. Neutrality is another example. At the last election Government's communication channels were largely silent, so much so that I took it upon myself to write to the Chief Minister during the last election urging him to address this issue, to at the very least reshare information posted by vote.je.

[17:00]

During the Chief Minister's election question time I asked the Chief Minister to explain why the Government chose to remain silent during the election period across all its social media channels, to which he replied: "I think there are probably some lessons to be learned. I think the Government is keen to separate itself from the election processes but we did, following pressure from the Deputy, consider that and we did put some very basic electoral factual information out after taking advice on the Government's social media channels. But in future I think now once we have done it and the world did not end we can get better at it for the next election." That is taken directly from *Hansard*. Neutrality should never mean silence when it comes to promoting the democratic process. Government's communication reach is vast and it should be used to the back the work of vote.je, the Greffe, and this Assembly. Why not cement that commitment now by agreeing to this amendment? P.P.C. and the States Greffe have a vital role in helping Islanders understand our political system, how the Assembly works and how they can take part, but they cannot achieve that in isolation. Government has a responsibility to work alongside the Greffe, schools, the Parishes, and other

organisations to encourage an informed and engaged population. This is why I believe it is entirely appropriate for this to be recognised in the Government's Strategic Policy. This is not about taking responsibility away from P.P.C.; it is about recognising that strengthening democracy is a shared responsibility and that Government has a part to play. The third issue is a suggestion that the automatic voter registration - A.V.R. - programme needs no explicit place in the Common Strategic Policy because it is already operational and funded. A.V.R. is arguably the most transformative democratic upgrade our Island has seen in decades. The Council points out that A.V.R. is already operational and that its long-term operation and maintenance form part of existing operational and budgetary planning. I am not disputing this, nor am I asking for a new programme of expenditure for the sake of having one, but a system like this needs ongoing attention. Modern software, secure data sharing between the Parishes, Judicial Greffe and Government departments needs long-term institutional backing. It has to be maintained, supported and kept up to date. My concern is that the importance of this system should be recognised, and that its continued operation should not become an afterthought once the initial implementation is complete. If Government sees its job as finished because the platform has launched, the risk is that the system degrades over time. But if Government is already committed to maintaining and supporting it, then recognising that commitment in the C.S.P. should not be a problem. In fact, it provides greater clarity about the importance attached to maintaining the infrastructure that supports democratic participation. The fourth and final issue is the comments statement that it is not necessary or proportionate because the policy should contain only the highest strategic priorities and everything else is "the daily business of the departments concerned". I accept the principle but let us look closely at what is in the C.S.P. Action 8.3 is to upgrade medicines and controlled drugs regulation. Action 6.4 is to upgrade and replace public buildings. Action 11.1 is to ensure a balanced budget. Now, I support all of them but each is work that departments and Ministers carry out as part of their normal business, so why is the test applied to my amendment, not the test applied to the rest of the document? I have 3 questions, and I would be grateful if a number of Members from the Council of Ministers who speak in this debate can answer them. First, if this amendment is rejected which Minister is accountable to this Assembly for increasing the openness of Government? Second, if it is already embedded what will we see in a year's time that shows it? What is the measure? Thirdly, the policy says Ministers will use the Island outcome indicators to monitor progress on everything they do. I know there is an indicator for trust in Government but trust is the result so where is the indicator for what produces it? How open Government is? Whether people can find information? Whether they take part? If this amendment is rejected who is answerable when the trust indicator moves? We talk frequently about improving public services, strengthening our economy, investing in our communities and delivering better outcomes for Islanders. None of that removes our responsibility to ensure that the democratic institutions through which those decisions are made remain open, accessible and accountable. People should not have to be experts in navigating Government websites or systems to find the important public information that they require, they should not have to wonder whether their contribution to a consultation has genuinely been taken into account, and they should not have to feel that democratic participation is reserved for a small group of people who already understand the system. We need to make it easier for the public to participate, easier for the public to understand decisions, and easier for the public to hold those in positions of responsibility to account. That is a responsibility Government must share. I am not asking for agreement with every detail of my reasoning, I am asking Members to recognise that these principles deserve more than a passing reference or an assumption that they will somehow be achieved through the delivery of other priorities. If the Government genuinely agrees with the principles underpinning this amendment, I see no reason why it should be unwilling to make them an explicit part of its strategic direction. We should not simply assume that transparency, accountability and democratic engagement will happen. We should commit to making them happen. I make the amendment.

The Bailiff:

Is the amendment seconded? **[Seconded]**

10.5.2 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:

I have huge respect for Deputy Alves and her commitment to transparency and openness, and her passion about that shines through in her speech. I am not going to deal with all elements, but I am going to pick up on one particular point that she raised. She argued that just because the Government has made a commitment to embed openness and transparency, that does not guarantee an open and transparent culture. It does not guarantee that Ministers will live by those cultural values. She, in support of that, quoted the Information Commissioner as ruling that my department should not have withheld field numbers which had had biosolids spread on them in recent years. Well, I am happy to say, I do live the values of openness and transparency and I can demonstrate that. This Government is embedding those values in what it does. She may or may not recall that a couple of months I overturned the department's position on withholding that field data. I directed officers to engage with the Information Commissioner in a positive way, and that data has been published, even though it came at some cost to the department and, therefore, the taxpayer. In doing that work, I engaged closely with relevant Ministerial colleagues, all of whom backed the decision to release that data. She says openness, transparency and accountability should be a shared responsibility. I embrace that, I have already acted on it, I do not need a C.S.P. commitment to inspire me in that direction. I support the Council of Ministers' position, which is that this is stuff certainly I - and I think Ministers in general - believe in. It is a strong belief and it does not need a C.S.P. commitment to embed it. I hope I have provided the reason why I think that is the case.

10.5.3 Senator L.J. Farnham:

I am pleased to follow Deputy Renouf. I too hold Deputy Alves in high regard. We work very well and very closely together. I enjoyed working for her when she was an Assistant Chief Minister. **[Laughter]** I did have a speech written but I am going to refer to the comments; Deputy Alves has commented on them so I will draw from those as I reply. While the Council of Ministers does not support this amendment it does fully endorse the principles. I am pleased to say that in all my time in Government I feel encouraged that this Council of Ministers is far more prepared to adopt and improve transparency, as the example given by Deputy Renouf recently, which was supported unanimously by Council of Ministers. The latest debate around safeguarding; the Council of Ministers met yesterday and we were unanimous in our support for improving transparency around all such aspects, especially with safeguarding. These are values that are fundamental to good government and are reflected throughout the Government's programme of work. The amendment seeks to establish a new priority 12 on increasing Government transparency, openness and accountability, alongside a number of specific actions relating to public engagement, democratic education and support for the automatic voter registration system. I think the Deputy knows how much I support that because we worked closely together in the rather fraught run-up to the last election where we were trying to consolidate, compile and match up all the relevant lists which - thanks to the tremendous work of the Parishes, the Greffe, and others - we succeeded in and delivered a successful election. However, while the Council of Ministers supports the intent of the amendment it does not consider it necessary or proportionate to create an additional strategic priority within the C.S.P. and, therefore, recommends the amendment be rejected. Under the States of Jersey Law 2005, the functions of the Council of Ministers include agreeing and lodging a statement of their C.S.P. that sets out the highest strategic priorities for the Government for its term of office, while accepting that other work will also take place across the public sector. I am pleased to say that a new approach to transparency is already embedding itself in that work. Transparency, accountability and public engagement are principles that should and will inform how all priorities are delivered and should underpin the actions of all States Members. I will undertake - and I am sure all Ministers will support me if I speak on their behalf - to say that will be the policy we adopt in this new Council of Ministers. In relation to its own work, the Council of Ministers considers that these principles are already

embedded across Government's existing commitments and ways of working, and that will continue to be reflected right throughout the delivery of this Common Strategic Policy as well, for the avoidance of any doubt. In relation to actions 12.1 and 12.2, the Government already has established mechanisms to support transparency and accessibility of information, including the F.O.I. system, which we are working to improve. Deputy Ferey is leading on that. The publication of performance information, public consultations, annual reporting, and the ongoing development of open data initiatives; as the Deputy also mentioned in her opening speech. Work to improve the accessibility, clarity and usability of Government information will continue, so a separate strategic priority we do not feel is required for that. The Council of Ministers also notes a responsibility for promoting democratic engagement and participation extends beyond Government alone. Action 12.3 relates to the democratic and political education and support for the work of the State Greffe. Again, that can be taken as read from the Council of Ministers. Ministers fully support the important contribution made by the States Greffe in this area, however, the promotion of democratic awareness, civic participation and public engagement already forms part of the terms of reference and ongoing work programme of the Privileges and Procedures Committee, and the Committee can be assured of our continued support where it is necessary and appropriate. P.P.C. has primary responsibility for matters relating to electoral engagement, voter participation, and democratic education. This does not, we feel, therefore need to be replicated within the Common Strategic Policy. Similarly, the Council of Ministers recognise the importance of automatic voter registration and remains committed to working with partner organisations to ensure the electoral administration remains effective, secure, and fit for purpose. We have already agreed to adopt a lessons learnt approach to the next elections following what we learnt earlier this year. However, the long-term operation, maintenance and development of the system forms part of existing operational and budgetary planning arrangements and does not require explicit inclusion in the strategic policy.

[17:15]

The amendment itself acknowledges that such ongoing costs are already accommodated within the existing budgets, and we will ensure we help wherever we can to maintain those budgets and ensure that progress in this area is not impeded by budgetary restraints. I am keeping half an eye on the Minister for Treasury and Resources as I say that, but I am sure he will agree with me. I think that was a nod. In summary, the Council of Ministers agrees that strong public trust depends upon Government being open, transparent and accountable. These principles will continue to guide the delivery of all Government priorities and all Government work. However, the proposed amendment would not materially enhance the Government's ability to achieve those objectives beyond the arrangements and commitments already in place. This is a shared responsibility with the Privileges and Procedures Committee, this whole Assembly, and the Government. Accordingly, the Council of Ministers recommends that Members reject the amendment. While doing so, Ministers commit to assisting and working closely with the Privileges and Procedures Committee wherever possible to promote transparency, openness, accountability, civic partnership and public confidence. I thank the Deputy not only for bringing the amendment - because it is worthy of a debate - but all the work she has done in the past in this area.

10.5.4 Connétable A.N. Jehan of St. John:

I would encourage Members to support this. We have just heard what a great idea it is from the Chief Minister, how he is doing it all, so I do not see any reason to turn it down. Over the last 5 years I have held 252 drop-ins in St. John, with 1,149 people attending those sessions. We, and other Parishes, host the school council elections in our Parish Hall with a fully-fledged polling station, assisted by district Deputies. That could be done across the Island with a little bit of will and enthusiasm, rather than people visiting a Parish once every 3 months. I thank the Minister for Infrastructure, who is committed to engaging with parishioners and businesses to speak to them about the northern sewer network. We have just heard the Chief Minister say that he and his Council are

open to transparency, so here is an invitation to him and his Council to do what has been done before. A previous Council of Ministers visited the Parishes to hold their meetings and then offered the public an opportunity to come and speak to Ministers. At St. John they were queuing out the door; not the Ministers, the public. Over 40 people came at a lunchtime session to sit down with a Minister and discuss issues with them. Why did that stop? Why do we not encourage that to go ahead? I would ask Members to particularly look at both 12.3 and 12.4 of the proposition. 12.3 talks about supporting the Parishes, *et cetera*. Members may be surprised to learn that despite the election being held in June, and despite the significant contributions particularly from the electoral administrators and countless volunteers, that the Parishes are still waiting to be paid for the additional work that was carried out on election day. I think it is shameful, quite frankly. Turning to 12.4, the A.V.R., it is essential that this is supported, and I am encouraged by the Chief Minister's commitment to a lessons-learned approach. Public elections are not held every 4 years, public elections are held every 9 months. There is currently a public election taking place that relies on the new A.V.R. I have to say, our experience is not necessarily a positive experience. An urgent audit is required of the A.V.R. system, and that should be carried out, and assurances that funding will be made available to ensure that the A.V.R. system is kept up to date on a monthly basis to ensure accurate, secure, and modern electoral data. If you are committed, like I am, to democracy, I urge Members to support this.

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

I am very pleased to follow my fellow Connétable of St. John. We were discussing this at Comité des Connétables on Monday. I will cut some of my speech because he said a lot of it, but we do absolutely need an urgent audit. Funding and further development of A.V.R. is essential because, as the Constable says, we have elections every 9 months not just every 4 years, and it is not up to scratch at the moment. It must be a priority and we do need the funding. I will miss out some of my speech, but I do rise to speak firmly in favour of the 12th amendment brought forward by my colleague, Deputy Carina Alves. This amendment is as straightforward as it is vital. It asks this Assembly to explicitly insert a new strategic priority to the Government's 4 year roadmap to increase Government transparency, openness and accountability, proactively support civic and democratic engagement and participation, and strengthen public trust in Jersey's democratic institutions. When the Council of Ministers brought their Common Strategic Policy to this Chamber they outlined 4 pillars focused on the economy, the cost of living, infrastructure and financial stability. These are, without doubt, critical issues, but we cannot successfully build a house if we ignore the foundation upon which it stands. Trust, transparency and democratic engagement are not optional add-ons or secondary priorities to be dealt with only when times are easy. They are the foundational bedrock of a functioning, healthy society. How can we ask the people of Jersey to trust us with largescale economic changes, infrastructure investments or fiscal management if we do not structurally prioritise being open and accountable to them. Lately we have heard growing calls from the public for greater openness. We have seen international observers raise concerns regarding the tightening of our election and campaign finance laws. We have witnessed the ongoing challenges of ensuring that standard procedures and complaint frameworks operate with full visibility. These are clear signals that we cannot afford to look the other way. Public trust is hard earned and easily lost. If we fail to name transparency and democratic engagement as explicit core priorities for the next 4 years, we send a clear message to Islanders that their right to know and their desire to participate are mere afterthoughts. This amendment does not disrupt the Government's operational goals, rather it strengthens them. By voting pour to this amendment we commit this Government to proactive engagement, we commit to making the public sector more accessible, breaking down the barriers that make ordinary citizens feel disconnected from the decisions made in this Chamber, and to ensuring that accountability is woven into the very fabric of our Ministerial priorities. We want Jersey to succeed, but that success must be rooted in an open relationship between the Government and the people we serve. Let us send a definitive united message to our parishioners and constituents today.

We hear you, we value you, and we are willing to hold ourselves to the highest standards of transparency. I urge all Members to support Deputy Alves's amendment.

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

I am also minded to support this proposition. I agree with a lot of what the Connétables have said, both of them, and so I am not going to repeat what they have said. I will just make the additional point that I think there has been some discussion and maybe reticence from the Council of Ministers that they feel that this is a criticism of them, that we need to trust them. But it is more about the culture within Government. Whereas Deputy Alves has put it under one of the pillars, investing in Jersey, I would argue it should be part of the foundation going across all 4 pillars. The transparency is really important. Currently we are spending a fortune on F.O.I.s. A lot of that information should just be published by rote and then we would be saving so much money. It is more about setting a message to Government and to the departments that you are all managing, and if we set it as a strategic priority then hopefully that should start filtering through. I am a little bit more worried about increasing spend on increasing engagement. I think we did a lot of that within the election and it did not result in a significant or any uplift, so I would be worried about that. However, given what you have all just told us in Deputy Rebindaine's proposition, the fact that the Budget does not necessarily dictate the C.S.P., then I am confident we can deal with that in the Budget debate. Provided no additional money is allocated to that, I do not see that is a reason why I would not vote for this proposition. I am also really supportive about the focus on surveys. I do have an issue in terms of how our surveys are sometimes done. I would urge the Council of Ministers to look at giving Ian Cope and the Statistics Department additional resource for that, so that the surveys can be run effectively and we are not having duplicate surveys, open links, *et cetera*, and they are performed well so that we can make evidence-based decisions. But, yes, I will be supporting this proposition.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Sir, I know it is a few minutes early but could I maybe ask to move the adjournment and, before I do, maybe ask the Chief Minister to consider whether he could accept this overnight?

The Bailiff:

That is a matter for the Chief Minister to consider.

Senator L.J. Farnham:

Reading the room - and there is not a lot of difference between where we are - I will discuss with Ministers overnight and let Members know.

The Bailiff:

Are Members content to adjourn? Adjourned until 9.30 a.m. tomorrow.

ADJOURNMENT

[17:26]