4.9 Connétable T. Palmer of St. Lawrence of the Minister for Economic Development regarding support to private sector employers competing with public sector wages. (OQ.92/2026)

Will the Minister advise what support, if any, he intends to provide any private sector employers who are struggling to compete with public sector wages and benefits and who, facing staff shortages, are unable to deliver their services?

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

I certainly recognise that the rapid growth in the public sector over the period 2022 to 2024 has created challenges for other employers in Jersey. This growth has now been curbed and the Council of Ministers is committed to preserving front line services while limiting the expansion of the public sector. The recruitment freeze has been extended through 2027. From my own experience, I recognise the challenges in recruiting and retaining staff. I remain committed to raising these issues around the Council of Ministers table. I believe steps like the current public sector recruitment freeze and greater emphasis on apprenticeship programmes within the Civil Service are positive steps to ensure we fill public sector vacancies whenever we can, from within whenever we can. The department for C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) also operates a number of apprenticeship schemes, and this has featured prominently in the recent Better Business Support Scheme. The goal of these schemes is to strengthen the pipeline of locally-trained skilled workers, particularly in specialist and technical roles where skills are in short supply.