WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY H.L. JEUNE OF ST. JOHN, ST. LAWRENCE AND TRINITY
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 19th OCTOBER 2026
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 26th OCTOBER 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.