2025.12.08

2.2 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Minister for Social Security regarding the full Actuarial modelling evidence behind her recent public statement that the Social Security Fund could pay pensions and benefits for seven and half years (OQ.269/2025):

Will the Minister agree to publish the full actuarial modelling evidence behind her recent public statement that the Social Security Fund could pay pensions and benefits for 7½ years, even if no contributions were made, and will she advise whether this was verified internally by the Treasury Department or by the actuaries?

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central (The Minister for Social Security):

There was no actuarial modelling required for this because it was just a simple sum. The figures are contained within the proposed Government Budget and it would have not been the type of question that would have been appropriate to ask actuaries.

2.2.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

The Minister has made a number of statements about the Social Security Fund's future sustainability and capacity to pay pensions. Could she explain how such definitive statements can be made when there is no updated actuarial information that has been made available or published?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

As Members will be aware, I have received 2 letters from actuaries and I have commissioned an extra additional report from the actuaries that will be available ahead of next year's Budget.

2.2.2 Deputy J. Renouf:

One of the things the Minister, and the Government in fact, have said repeatedly is that 7½ years is very good coverage compared to other funds. Is she aware, or did she notice, for example, that the largest economy in the world, the United States, the insurance funds have 10 years' coverage, and that puts the coverage of the Jersey funds in a slightly different light?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

The United States is one country that I did not look at as a comparison; we looked at more similar jurisdictions to us. Again, we will look to the advice from the actuaries when we receive it, and that will be open to the next Assembly to take decisions based on it.

2.2.3 Deputy J. Renouf:

Does the Minister accept that her answer suggests that the Government looks as hard as it needs to to find the evidence it wants to support its case, rather than actually looking to objectively discover whether the fund is in a good state or not?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

No.

2.2.4 Deputy I. Gardiner:

Would the Minister explain why the assumption was plus 1 per cent above expected, and not other assumptions that the Minister put towards the actuaries to review?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I do not think that question is related to this question. I think it is related to the Oral Question that Deputy Renouf is asking later.

The Bailiff:

Yes, thank you.

2.2.5. Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I did not hear the Minister confirm that she would commit to publishing the actuarial information, but can she give an assurance that her work will involve remaining clear and transparent about the assumptions, and can she assure us that these will be realistic in light of current economic and demographic pressures?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

The equation used to refer to the sum that is referred to in the question is quite simple. The equation is the end amount in the fund at the end of the year divided by the payments made out of the fund in benefits. All advice that I have received from actuaries has been published.