

STATES OF JERSEY

OFFICIAL REPORT

WEDNESDAY, 26th JUNE 2024

PUBLIC BUSINESS – Resumption	3
1. Cannabis: Decriminalisation of Personal Possession and Recreational Use (P.31/2024) as amended - resumption	3
1.1 Deputy A.F. Curtis of St. Clement:.....	3
Deputy M.R. Scott:.....	4
Mr. M. Jowitt, H.M. Solicitor General:.....	4
1.1.1 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:	4
1.1.2 Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:	4
1.1.3 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South	5
2. Transfer of 2024 departmental underspend into the Stabilisation Fund (P.35/2024). 14	
2.1 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North:	14
2.1.1 Deputy E. Millar of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:	16
2.1.2 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North:	17
2.1.3 Deputy A.F. Curtis:.....	17
2.1.4 Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier South:	17
2.1.5 Deputy M.B. Andrews:	18
3. Affordable and right-size housing provision on the Waterfront (P.37/2024) - as amended (P.37/2024 Amd.)	20
3.1 Deputy H. Miles:.....	21
3.1.1 Deputy E. Millar:	23
3.1.2 Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South:	23
3.1.3 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:.....	26
3.1.4 Deputy M.R. Scott:	27
3.1.5 Deputy A.F. Curtis:.....	28
3.1.6 Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:	29
3.1.7 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:	30
3.1.8 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:	32
3.1.9 Deputy M.B. Andrews:	33
3.1.10 Deputy H.L. Jeune:.....	34
3.1.11 Deputy H.M. Miles:	35
ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS.....	38
4. Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin (Chair, Privileges and Procedures Committee):	38
ADJOURNMENT.....	38

[9:30]

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

PUBLIC BUSINESS – Resumption

1. Cannabis: Decriminalisation of Personal Possession and Recreational Use (P.31/2024) as amended - resumption

The Bailiff:

We continue with the debate on P.31, as amended. Next listed to speak is Deputy Alex Curtis.

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

It is nice to restart the debate on a second day of sitting. I do not rise to say much on this debate. I think we have heard many arguments for and against various parts of this proposition, and I thank those who have contributed to the debates. Those who have discussed elements that were part of my amendment, I would have really appreciated if that had been included within those debates as well, but we are where we are. I would like to start quickly by asking a question about the interpretation of paragraph (a), that maybe, as presiding officer, you can confirm.

The Bailiff:

Yes, just one moment. Greffier, do you have a copy? I do not have a consolidated version of what has now been agreed so it may not be necessary, but please do ask the question.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

It may not be necessary. It is purely around part (a). It makes it simpler. My question, Sir, is: is the interpretation of part (a) a statement of intent akin to an in-principle decision that the States are making and does it infer any action that will occur immediately on voting on part (a)? So, should the States decide whether they are of the opinion (a) that personal possession, personal cultivation and recreational use should be decriminalised, is there any action that the States or anybody will be taking immediately? Or is this a statement of intent that until work undertaken by part (b) is brought back to the States or to the Attorney General or otherwise nothing will change tomorrow?

The Bailiff:

That would be my interpretation of (a); (a) is a statement of policy or intent, but it does not mandate any specific action or working connection with it.

Deputy A.F. Curtis:

Thank you very much, Sir. Really all I have left to say is having heard the arguments put forward against, to me, many who spoke in favour of (b) or spoke against (a), we are still of the opinion that I think, as Deputy Renouf described, we have to face reality. We have to address the fact that the current approach to criminalisation of cannabis beyond the guidance currently provided by the Attorney General is the right way forward. I ask Members, before anyone else that speaks and as we get to summing up, to ask themselves if they support (b), if they want the Government to put in policy time and resource to bring forward the solutions to address a new approach, hopefully for what Members agree, a better approach to substance use and they want to support part (b), I really want them to ask themselves long and hard what is wrong with supporting part (a) as well. We often take this approach. We say we want an in-principle decision to give the States and the Government a mandate to do work so that that work is productive. This States could agree unanimously against the policy decision in principle, but if we did I do not think any of us should be wanting to ask the Government or anybody to perform detailed and long, and arguably to a cost, an element of work that the States have already given a decision on. For that reason, I ask Members to consider: do they support the principle? They should not be worried that tomorrow this will make cultivation,

possession or recreational use treated any differently by the Honorary Police, by the Parish Halls and by the Attorney General than it is today. This is purely a statement of intent to give part (b) a mandate. With that, thank you.

The Bailiff:

Deputy Scott you have already spoken in the debate.

Deputy M.R. Scott of St. Brelade:

Yes, I just wondered if I could ask a follow-up question of the Solicitor General.

The Bailiff:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Is there any legal definition of “recreational”, please?

Mr. M. Jowitt., H.M. Solicitor General:

No, there is not.

Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville and St. Martin:

I was going to raise exactly the same point as Deputy Curtis to clarify the in-principle decision. Thank you.

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

I rise very quickly because I very much support Deputy Curtis and what he has just clarified. I just wanted to maybe put back into the debate that was had yesterday because I think it was quite conflated in certain areas that what this proposal and (a), (b) and (c) in the proposition is trying to put forward, is trying to make a step towards a more fairer compassionate approach. I think that it is important to recognise that it is very much complexities in cannabis use and this seeks to guide rather than to punish. To guide rather than to punish. Because I do not understand why we can make it legal for over 7,000 Islanders to access medical cannabis, but others are criminalised. I do not understand how we can do that. This helps to have that compassionate approach because decriminalisation does not mean, and it does not have to be a free for all, it does not mean that everybody will suddenly be on the streets using cannabis. It is about developing clear guidelines that we can establish, that we can understand, and that is where of course in (b) why the Council of Ministers amended it to having all those different points of what could be looked at in relation to (b). So I wanted to put that point across, that decriminalisation helps to have a compassionate approach, but it will work best when it is in conjunction with other elements around harm reduction, evidence-based drug dependency treatment services, access to different services that Islanders can access without fear of arrest or punishment or stigma or discrimination. It is important that that comes as a package as a whole, including education and health. I would like Members to think about that as we get closer to the end of the debate, that this is more of a compassionate approach and recognises to guide rather than to punish.

1.1.2 Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

I would just like to start by acknowledging the point made by Deputy Jeune just then about fairness and compassion. She is of course quite right, but one issue that we all need to take into account before voting in this debate, and there have been very many excellent speeches on a number of aspects, but I think a couple of issues have not been raised as yet. That is our responsibility to the community and how this decision will shape our community, if we take this decision and move forward today. We are of course in a more liberal society today and, yes, fairness and compassion is quite right, but what we must consider is if we take this new approach, that there will be an increase

in the number of users. At the moment, people who use cannabis do so knowing that they are breaking the law. There is very likely to be an increase of usage if that criminalisation is removed from that decision making. We can only look to other places where there have been similar changes to view how that has impacted upon communities. I can tell the Assembly, I recently spoke to a person who lives in New York in a smart block of flats in a smart area of New York.

[9:45]

They go out on to the street immediately outside their home every day to find early in the morning people smoking cannabis, and that has an impact on people's productivity. I do believe that this Government has maintained the economic principle of increasing productivity in the Island and we have to take into account the impact that use of cannabis may have on members of our community and their productivity within our economy and their attitude to work, their engagement in our society. It is an important point to make. Others also in this debate have acknowledged that this is a similar consideration to that which we took in the assisted dying debate, and in that it was acknowledged that we agreed to take the further steps which will require more work and therefore more cost to our public servants who will have to undertake that work and bring forward the legislation. In the times where we have heard yesterday that difficult decisions are having to be made, money is found to support our health service and our education service, which are important services - the most important - that need continuing and further investment in society, then we have that responsibility as an Assembly to take a balanced decision and consider the impact on our decisions and how that will have an impact and an effect upon the work of our public service and the use and availability of monies that we will have to decide upon in the forthcoming Government Plan. I just wanted to raise those 2 additional points, which I do not think have been taken into account fully as yet in this debate. It is an important decision. We are a more liberal society today, but we have to be mindful of the consequences of our decisions and whether our society and community can well cope with them, both financially and from a productivity perspective.

The Bailiff:

Does any other Member wish to speak on the proposition? If no other Member wishes to speak, then I close the debate and call upon Deputy Coles to respond.

1.1.3 Deputy T.A. Coles of St. Helier South

I am afraid I might have fallen foul to Deputy Ward's normal trick of making lots of notes and not being able to read them afterwards, so I will start with some of the points that have been raised earlier this morning. I am quite surprised by Deputy Moore's comments as it was her Government that brought in the Substance Use Strategy, which focuses on harm reduction, which is the principle at which decriminalisation of end users of drugs actually stems from. I am not quite sure then why this was not considered before that strategy was published in 2023. There have been a lot of comments about the effects of cannabis and people who have suffered from mental health problems because of it. I just would like to say that I am sorry to everybody who has had to witness this, as I am somebody who has had to witness it as well. There is a lot of talk now within the medical profession that a lot of these conditions are underlying and cannabis is the spark that lights the fuse that makes the powder explode unfortunately. But I must remind everybody that cannabis is illegal already and people are using it, and these effects are happening. I go back in time in my head and think when and why was cannabis and other substances made illegal in the first place? We look in the 1920s when America decided to bring prohibition on alcohol. This came at the end of the First World War where people were returning with these new mental health conditions that people did not understand; shell shock. People self-medicated, people drank. The Americans thought this is a problem, we should stop people drinking. So they brought in prohibition. That did not work, that did not last, that caused huge problems in racketeering, organised crime, violence. So they realised that was a bad idea and they stepped away from it. In the 1930s, and we see cannabis became illegal and we are starting the

attempts through there. This came after the 1929 Wall Street crash, the Great Depression, which caused people again into self-medicating. Desperation ran through the world, ran through the public, people did not know what to do. People turned to what they could to make themselves feel better in that time, again coping with mental health problems. We then look at the United Nations one narcotic convention which came into fact in 1961. This work was started by the then called League of Nations in the 1950s, which again came after the end of the Second World War. Another point where we are seeing great upheaval within our society, people coming back from war, suffering from mental health problems, people turning to substances to self-medicate. Now I do not blame Governments at the time because back then we did not know mental health the way we know mental health now. We did not know how the brain worked in different ways and how we treated these people. But we know better today. This is why after 60 years of trying to incarcerate people and criminalise people for self-medicating with substances, be they legal or illegal, it is time to change the tact on this. That is why the principle of decriminalisation is an important thing for us to debate and for me why it is so important. I look to Deputy Warr now, because he made a good point in his speech. What legacy do we want to leave as an Assembly? We had a debate on assisted dying, a debate around dignity. I want this to be the Assembly that took the hard decisions that reflected on people's dignity, and I think by not criminalising the end users of cannabis is by treating people with more dignity. I say for those who make comments that they do not necessarily understand the problem quite so much and they are not sure what to do and how to vote. I am sure Deputy Southern is going to give me daggers when I say this, but if you are not sure about whether to vote for or against this, well, this is why we have our abstention button. You can vote against ... you do not have to vote for part (a), you do not have to vote against it. You could abstain from that vote. Vote for part (b) and ask the Government to come back with proper ideas, proper decisions, but do not knock down the principle if you feel that you do not understand it well enough. I would like to thank Deputy Doublet because she made the best point of this entire speech in my opinion. The fact that we have to remember that we have been broadcasted that drugs are bad for 60 years. Every Member in here had education telling us the evils and the perils of drugs. But we have learnt more. The world has moved forward. We have to unlearn what we have been broadcasted on for so many years. That is the really, really hard thing for us all to do. We have all been brought up with this fixed position that that is what we were told, that is what we have to believe. But research changes, methodologies change. Again, if I go back to the post-war of the First World War, when men were running away on the battlefields, they were shot for cowardice rather than we actually understand about the fight, flight and freeze response that happens when people go through a mental health crisis. I do not necessarily want to pick apart some people's, but I do have to say that with Deputy Howell's speech and comments, I was there thinking how easy it would be to replace cannabis with alcohol, to describe every action that she was talking about lowering inhibitions, making unwise decisions. This is all created by something that is legal. I should really also address obviously the change again on why I had to remove the over-18s part from my proposition. This is not about encouraging children and providing cannabis for children. No, of course it is not. This is about making sure that we can still educate people into the fact that there are effects from drugs and, if you choose to use drugs, they will have implications. There is a lot of talk of research as well in this debate. One piece of research that I always found very interesting was a desktop piece done by an American University into the effects on the developing brain of alcohol versus cannabis. The research clearly shows that alcohol has a worse impact on the developing brain from people from the age of 14 to 25 than cannabis. Yet we do not criminalise children for having alcohol, even though they are not legally allowed to have it. It is just simply removed from them. The person who supplies that child with alcohol is the person who is supposed to be punished under our laws. There is no reason why any changes in this does not mean we could not come in with more stricter punishments for those who provide cannabis to minors. In fact, actually, I do not often say this, but the U.S. (United States) has some very good legislative processes on their punishments. If you take drink driving, for example, in the U.S., if you are drunk behind the wheel of a car and you crash into a wall and it is just you in the car, you are treated as a

misdemeanour. You have a crash in a car, whether it is into a wall, into somebody else, but if there is a child involved it becomes a felony. That means the severity of the punishment is increased because not only has your action affected you, but it has affected a child. Maybe that is something we should consider. There is a punishment for dealing drugs, but there is a harsher punishment for dealing drugs to children. It is just a thought but more to indicate the fact that I am not advocating supplying drugs to children. Constable Jehan of St. John, I am glad to hear that your work is underway for developing a cannabis strategy in regards to the Motor Traffic Law. I know this was said in the previous Assembly, but by which point my proposition had already been submitted. But it is good to make sure that cannabis is directed separately within that law because obviously the effects are different from alcohol and can be different from other drugs, and so we should be considering them in the round and individually as well. Just to make the point on why I have had ... the proposition mentions a roadside capacity test. I am quite concerned that our Island has ... when people get to a certain age or a certain condition, they go to see a doctor to gauge whether they still have capacity to drive. I am not sure if you are aware, but I was quite staggered when I found out that that doctor does not actually get into a car with a person who has claimed whether or not they have capacity. Constable Lewis has indicated, but for the majority of time, within my experience, the doctor does not get in the car for a very long point to judge whether somebody has capacity, but actually if the police pull someone over maybe there is a test that does not require electronics but has the ability to gauge whether somebody at that moment had capacity to drive, it does not necessarily lead to anything ...

The Bailiff:

If I could just ask you to pause for a moment. There are 2 Connétables who have put their lights on, it may be that there is a point of clarification or it may be that...

Connétable M.K. Jackson of St. Brelade:

If the Deputy is happy to give way just on a point of clarification. In fact, the process is that the individual is referred to the Constable by a medical practitioner ...

The Bailiff:

That is not a point of clarification, funnily enough. It has to be a point of clarification of the speech that you have made or seeking a point of clarification from the Deputy. You might wish to couch it, Connétable, in the form of: "You have given this indication, can you clarify whether your understanding of the position is A, B and C?" which would technically be a point of clarification of the Deputy's speech. You cannot inform people.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Indeed, thank you, I understand. Will the Deputy just clarify that his point that the individual is not subjected to a driving test is in fact correct? Thank you.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I am grateful to the Constable of St. Brelade. No, I do not believe that the people are subjected to a driving test. As I said, my experience of it so far has been that the person who has questions over their capacity to drive is referred to a doctor but that doctor does not get into the car with them until he can get beyond a certain point. Whether that is right, whether that is wrong, but we are testing somebody's capacity at a single point where the police may come across somebody at a point, either through the effects of prescription drugs, illicit drugs, general tiredness, may have lost capacity to drive at that point, and maybe there could be some tests to gauge that. On the talk of cultivation and the risk of cultivating cannabis at home, the unknown strength of what people might be growing, I would like to point out to Members that home brew is legal. For some reason I have got a comment saying: "Rob Ward and moonshine" written down on my pad and I am thinking [Laughter] ... not insinuating that the good Deputy brews his own moonshine but when we talk about moonshine as an

incredibly strong home-brewed alcohol very famous within the U.S. we are allowed to brew our own alcohol at home in front of children. Is that right? Is that something else that maybe we need to look at? I see Deputy Curtis shaking his head but of course Deputy Curtis is the professional brewer of legal alcohol. **[Laughter]** Legal moonshine. There are ways, as it stands at the moment that it is not allowed, that we can bring in guidelines and directives of how we would like that to be controlled; there are ways that we can do that, so I do not necessarily see that that is fundamentally a problem.

[10:00]

I will come back to why I think decriminalisation is the right thing to do because, like I said, our Government has now its Substance Use Strategy which focuses on harm reduction. Harm reduction is about treating people with respect and dignity, accepting the fact that people will use substances of all types and that maybe the substance is not the problem but is a symptom of something else, that with decriminalisation people will be able to seek out support when they need it. Most importantly, it is when they want it because we force people into rehabilitation centres and rehab courses and drug awareness courses. Do you know they are more likely to fail if somebody has not gone willingly because their mind is not ready to accept the fact that there is a problem? If you allow it to be a case that it is safe for someone to say: “You know what, I think I have a problem. I think I need help” without the fear of repercussions, without the fear that they may be reported, arrested and end up with some form of record, be that through a civil sanction at Parish Hall that will still appear, as I said earlier, on your enhanced D.B.S. (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. This is how people deserve to be treated, this is the modern way of treating substance use, so this is why decriminalisation is something that we should be doing. It brings us in line with our own strategy. As regards to part (b) on this, I am glad that the Council of Ministers brought forward the amendment that they did because I look at how we need to control cannabis and, as I have said, criminalisation has not worked for controlling cannabis. Cannabis is still prevalent on our streets, as we say, with 6 per cent of our working population with a prescription. If those regulations change and less people get prescribed cannabis, do we think these people will just stop being cannabis users if they are not wanting to?

The Bailiff:

Deputy Coles, I am terribly sorry. Did you have a point of order or clarification?

Deputy K.L. Moore:

A point of clarification, yes. I think the speaker, in referring to ...

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

Is it not normal practice to ask if the speaker gives way?

The Bailiff:

Yes, that is true, that would have been my question. You wish a point of clarification?

Deputy K.L. Moore:

I do.

The Bailiff:

Deputy Coles, do you give way for a point of clarification? Because you are at liberty to but you do not have to.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I am aware I do not have to but with the greatest respect of all Members, I will.

The Bailiff:

Your point of clarification then, Deputy.

Deputy K.L. Moore:

Yes, could the Deputy clarify his comments in relation to the Substance Use Strategy? The harm reduction is identified in that use strategy but not the necessity of decriminalisation in order to treat and reduce the harm that is inflicted upon people who take drugs.

The Bailiff:

Are you able to provide clarification of that, Deputy, or ...

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I do not even know where to begin. There are a number of websites on harm reduction and how the strategy works and part of that strategy with harm reduction is to remove the fear of reproach. I would maybe leave it up to Members what they believe reproach would mean in this context but for me reproach means the fear of criminalisation, which I believe to be fair.

The Bailiff:

Again, Deputy Doublet, you have a point of clarification?

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour:

Yes, I do.

The Bailiff:

Will you give way, Deputy?

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Could the Deputy clarify if he is referring to the action point on page 38 of that policy that states: "To continue progression away from criminalisation by reviewing and adopting specific policy options that fall under decriminalisation and legalisation aims"?

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Yes, I do. [Approbation]

The Bailiff:

There we are that answers 2 points of clarification in one fell swoop. Please do continue.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Thank you, Deputy Doublet.

The Bailiff:

I beg your pardon. Deputy Scott, do you have a point of clarification? [Members: Oh!]

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Could I just clarify that ...

The Bailiff:

Do you give way?

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I will just maybe say this is my final time.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

In terms of the interpretation of to move away from decriminalisation given the amount of decriminalisation we have, could the Deputy just clarify whether he considers that to be a move away from decriminalisation or towards in terms of the strategy? How did he interpret it?

The Bailiff:

If you are able to answer that.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Am I allowed to ask for a point of clarification from the Deputy?

The Bailiff:

No, I am afraid not. The point is, it is clearly asking for clarification as to what you understood the strategy to mean in terms of a move for or against criminalisation. That is my understanding of your question, Deputy Scott.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

The terms of that language. Thank you.

The Bailiff:

The terms of that language. It is a matter for you whether you have an answer to that or not. Entirely a matter for you.

Deputy T.A. Coles:

My interpretation of decriminalisation means removal of all criminal responsibility for something that is defined within this. At the moment we have what is considered decriminalisation with civil sanctions, so this is why people are still referred to Parish Hall where they still receive a fine and where that fine will appear on an enhanced D.B.S. check. This obviously still maintains a fear of reproach for their possession. My interpretation is that decriminalisation should be what is considered full decriminalisation, as in someone is not even exposed to that level of judiciary, that the police can either remove the cannabis from somebody if they are under the age of 18, and if somebody is over 18 and the amount is considered to be that of personal possession, an acceptable personal possession, then they would not be dealt with. That links me nicely on to one of the comments made by Deputy Le Hegarat, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, she wonders how well-trained officers would be able to determine how much an amount of cannabis is. Members may not be aware but those that use these substances do not carry around small sets of scales with them to weigh it every single time, most of them do it by sight. They will see a certain amount of cannabis in front of them, they will determine if they believe that is the right size for the amount that they are seeking to purchase and I see no reason why very well-trained officers, very capable officers, would not be able to do the same. If there were any concerns then that would be up to the officer's discretion still. Like I say, my proposition does not give a prescribed amount of what that cannabis should be. I would like Home Affairs to consult with the Attorney General and all other stakeholders in this as to what they believe would be an acceptable amount for somebody to carry, something that would be easily distinguishable to the officers by their naked eye. This brings me back on to part (b) and the amendment brought by the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers have included the word "legalisation". I think this is a very good time to highlight the difference between decriminalisation and legalisation. Decriminalisation, as I have just said, just removes the criminal activity from that level of possession, is what I was seeking; they have now included personal cultivation as well. You do not necessarily get the right controls that you want to protect people further from cannabis. There is still no regulation over the strength it is on the streets but I also realise that to go forward with legalisation takes a lot more work, a lot more time, and requires a much larger commitment. I had

hoped that somebody would have brought an amendment to my proposition with the term “legalisation” in because that meant we could have had the debate and we could have expressed that with legalisation can come so much more strong control. You can put so many more restrictions on it by legalising; however, you have to start somewhere. Where legalisation is a form of criminalisation, it is very worth remembering that decriminalisation does not automatically mean legalisation. This is why people who are still selling cannabis would still be criminals if they are not a licensed pharmacy or licensed to supply. Sorry, the fans are making my throat a bit ...

The Bailiff:

There is only water in the bottle, is there, Deputy?

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Yes, Sir. **[Laughter]** Maybe tomorrow. **[Laughter]** The supply would still be illegal because, like I said, I am not seeking to encourage more people to use cannabis, not until this cannabis industry, if it is for general sale, is better regulated. We need to know the strengths; people need to know the strengths. The fact that there are different strains of cannabis which have different effects on the body and the mind, that people need to know that these different effects, what they are likely to take and how it is going to affect them. These are all very important questions that you cannot answer and some are answered just by keeping it as a criminal offence anyway. This is why, again, I go back to the treatment of people that are using. I just think morally it is the right thing to do and that is what I come down to in myself, is morally I do not think it is justified to criminalise somebody who is self-medicating on something that 60 years ago Jersey decided should be illegal now because times change, things move on. I think I have rambled on for a while now and had many points of clarification, so I will be taking this in parts and I will call for the appel.

The Bailiff:

When you take it in parts, are you going to take (a) and then (b) and (c) together? Because (c) refers back to (b), I think, and therefore it cannot stand alone. So it would be ...

Deputy T.A. Coles:

Then I will have to take part (a) separately and (b) and (c) together.

The Bailiff:

The appel is called for. The vote is on part (a). I ask Members to return to their seats and ask the Greffier to open the voting and Members to vote. If Members have had the opportunity of casting their votes, then I ask the Greffier to close the voting. I beg your pardon, Deputy Scott, we are taking the vote.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Sorry, I am confused. Why has (c) got to be combined with (b)?

The Bailiff:

Let us deal with this vote first. Part (a) has been defeated: 22 votes pour; 23 votes contre, one abstention.

POUR: 22		CONTRE: 23		ABSTAIN: 1
Connétable of St. John		Connétable of St. Helier		Connétable of St. Martin
Connétable of St. Mary		Connétable of St. Lawrence		
Deputy G.P. Southern		Connétable of St. Brelade		
Deputy C.F. Labey		Connétable of Trinity		

Deputy M. Tadier	Connétable of Grouville		
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet	Connétable of St. Ouen		
Deputy K.F. Morel	Connétable of St. Saviour		
Deputy R.J. Ward	Deputy S.G. Luce		
Deputy C.S. Alves	Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat		
Deputy I. Gardiner (H)	Deputy S.M. Ahier		
Deputy S.Y. Mézec	Deputy I.J. Gorst		
Deputy T.A. Coles	Deputy L.J. Farnham		
Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée	Deputy K.L. Moore		
Deputy H.M. Miles	Deputy Sir P.M. Bailhache		
Deputy J. Renouf	Deputy D.J. Warr		
Deputy C.D. Curtis	Deputy M.R. Scott		
Deputy L.V. Feltham	Deputy R.E. Binet		
Deputy H.L. Jeune	Deputy M.E. Millar		
Deputy M.R. Ferey	Deputy A. Howell		
Deputy R.S. Kovacs	Deputy T.J.A. Binet		
Deputy A.F. Curtis	Deputy B. Ward		
Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson	Deputy K.M. Wilson		
	Deputy M.B. Andrews		

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

Those Members voting pour: the Connétables of St. John and St. Mary and Deputies Southern, Labey, Tadier, Doublet, Morel, Rob Ward, Alves, Gardiner, Mézec, Coles, Porée, Miles, Renouf, Feltham, Jeune, Ferey, Kovacs, Alex Curtis, Stephenson and Catherine Curtis. Those Members voting contre: the Connétables of St. Helier, St. Lawrence, St. Brelade, Trinity, Grouville, St. Ouen and St. Saviour and Deputies Luce, Le Hegarat, Ahier, Gorst, Farnham, Moore, Bailhache, Warr, Scott, Rose Binet, Millar, Howell, Tom Binet, Barbara Ward, Wilson and Andrews and the Connétable of St. Martin abstained.

The Bailiff:

The answer to your question, Deputy Scott, is that if you look at (c) there is “should be decriminalised, with the provision included in the legislation to be brought forward under paragraph (b)”. Accordingly, if (b) is not passed, (c) cannot stand as a single entity.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Then might I say that (b) nevertheless can be passed and the question is if it is not, then (c) should not be put forward, that it can still be put separately; (b) still can be put separately. Surely the decision is that if (b) is not passed then (c) is not ...

The Bailiff:

But if (b) is not passed (c) must fall.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Exactly, but to ...

The Bailiff:

If (b) is passed, you are asking whether that can be taken separately?

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Yes, please, because my intention was to vote ...

The Bailiff:

Well I think as a matter of logic it can be, so do you wish to take that separately, depending upon the outcome to (b)?

Deputy T.A. Coles:

I will take your advice and will take (b) and (c) together.

The Bailiff:

You do not wish to follow the opportunity given by Deputy Scott?

Deputy T.A. Coles:

No, because I do believe that this should be included as part of the work the Government wish to carry on with as their investigation works come through. I knew you were correct and this should be banded together.

The Bailiff:

Very well, certainly. It is a matter for the proposer of the proposition, (b) and (c) will be taken together. The appel is called for. The vote is on the adoption of (b) and (c) of the proposition. I ask the Greffier to open the voting and Members to vote. If Members have had the opportunity of casting their vote, then I ask the Greffier to close the voting; (b) and (c) combined have been adopted: 26 votes pour; 19 votes contre; one abstention.

POUR: 27	CONTRE: 19	ABSTAIN: 1
Connétable of St. Martin	Connétable of St. Helier	Deputy M.R. Scott
Connétable of St. John	Connétable of St. Lawrence	
Connétable of St. Mary	Connétable of St. Brelade	
Deputy G.P. Southern	Connétable of Trinity	
Deputy C.F. Labey	Connétable of Grouville	
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet	Connétable of St. Ouen	
Deputy K.F. Morel	Connétable of St. Saviour	
Deputy R.J. Ward	Deputy M. Tadier	
Deputy C.S. Alves	Deputy S.G. Luce	
Deputy I. Gardiner (H)	Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat	
Deputy L.J. Farnham	Deputy S.M. Ahier	
Deputy S.Y. Mézec	Deputy I.J. Gorst	
Deputy T.A. Coles	Deputy K.L. Moore	

Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée	Deputy Sir P.M. Bailhache		
Deputy H.M. Miles	Deputy D.J. Warr		
Deputy J. Renouf	Deputy M.E. Millar		
Deputy C.D. Curtis	Deputy A. Howell		
Deputy L.V. Feltham	Deputy B. Ward		
Deputy R.E. Binet	Deputy K.M. Wilson		
Deputy H.L. Jeune			
Deputy T.J.A. Binet			
Deputy M.R. Ferey			
Deputy R.S. Kovacs			
Deputy A.F. Curtis			
Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson			
Deputy M.B. Andrews			

[10:15]

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

Those Members voting pour: the Connétables of St. Martin, St. John and St. Mary and Deputies Southern, Labey, Doublet, Morel, Rob Ward, Alves, Gardiner, Farnham, Mézec, Coles, Porée, Miles, Renouf, Feltham, Rose Binet, Jeune, Tom Binet, Ferey, Kovacs, Alex Curtis, Stephenson, Andrews and Catherine Curtis. Those Members voting contre: the Connétables of St. Helier, St. Lawrence, St. Brelade, Trinity, Grouville, St. Ouen and St. Saviour and Deputies Tadier, Luce, Le Hegarat, Ahier, Gorst, Moore, Bailhache, Warr, Millar, Howell, Barbara Ward and Wilson and Deputy Scott abstained.

2. Transfer of 2024 departmental underspend into the Stabilisation Fund (P.35/2024)

The Bailiff:

Very well, the next item is Transfer of 2024 departmental underspend into the Stabilisation Fund, P.35, brought by Deputy Andrews. The main responder will be the Minister for Treasury and Resources and I ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The States are asked to decide whether they are of opinion to request the Minister for Treasury and Resources to lodge a proposition to enable the transfer of available departmental underspends, identified before 31st December 2024, from the Consolidated Fund to the Stabilisation Fund, with the transfer of available funds occurring no later than April 2025.

2.1 Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North:

I have been looking at the Fiscal Policy Panel report and it is very interesting and enlightening to see that the Stabilisation Fund has remained a contentious issue among consecutive States Assemblies. In the days when Deputy Ozouf was Minister for Treasury and Resources at one point in time there was over £100 million in the Stabilisation Fund; it was in a better position compared to what it is in now. Of course the financial crisis came along and the Government had to respond, the Government had to ensure that the Government was spending to intervene in the economy. Now the Stabilisation

Fund used to really have 2 purposes: one was a countercyclical measure and the other one was to ensure that public sector deficits were covered. With the latter, that has not really been the case in recent history and the reason being is because there is nothing in the Stabilisation Fund. Currently the fund value has less than £1 million left in it and even looking at the 2014 report the same issue was occurring. The Fiscal Policy Panel highlighted there was a need to make urgent transfers into the Stabilisation Fund and here we are 10 years later in exactly the same position. It is quite important when we are looking at the Stabilisation Fund that it is an element of fiscal policy for the Island whereby the Island has to solely rely upon either government spending or we may have to turn to borrowing. We do not have the flexibility compared to other jurisdictions. If you look at maybe the Eurozone they have monetary policy or if you look at, say, the Bank of England they will set monetary policy and so you have got fiscal policy complementing monetary policy but we do not have that. Of course there is a risk that the Government may need to turn to borrowing in times where we maybe see a negative output gap within the economy. Where the economy contracts there is less activity, the Government is required to step in; maybe unemployment is high and therefore the Government has to intervene. It has been a concern of mine noticing that the Stabilisation Fund is insufficient and what this means is when we are relying upon drawing down on funds, we either have to turn to the Consolidated Fund and of course then we could potentially be placing pressure on the fund where we could end up in a fiscal deficit. Or, as we have seen with some politicians, they will turn to the Strategic Reserve, which is in a very unhealthy position, forecast at 17 per cent of G.V.A. (gross value added) when it should be somewhere between 30 per cent to 60 per cent of G.V.A. At one point in time the fund stood at about 20 per cent of G.V.A. so it just goes to show it has declined relative to G.V.A. That has partly been down to consecutive States Assemblies prioritising growth bids and not making transfers to reserves, even when we have been in a position where a public sector surplus has been ascertained, where we had the opportunity to ensure that transfers were made both to the Stabilisation Fund and to the Strategic Reserve. Of course, bearing that in mind, due to there being nothing in the Stabilisation Fund, and looking at what is going to happen with the borrowing being agreed upon with the hospital, there will probably be an element of fiscal tightening, despite the fact that Pillar Two taxation is going to be something that is brought before the Assembly to debate and of course revenue is most likely to increase. The borrowing itself is going to be long term and it is going to be done in tranches, admittedly, but still it means government expenditure is going to increase. The likelihood that a public sector surplus is going to be maintained is something that I do struggle with because I think there might only be a small public sector surplus being maintained. Again, that is likely to leave us in a position where we are going to struggle to make transfers into the Stabilisation Fund. The purpose of my proposition really is this: we need to ensure that the aggregate amount of underspend that is identified on 31st December 2024 is transferred into the Stabilisation Fund. For far too long the fund has not received the much-needed transfers it deserves. I have to say, I do not believe that we should be capping transfers up to £25 million into the Stabilisation Fund. As I have seen, from 2011 there has been 6 years where there has been an underspend in excess of £25 million. Potentially the same could happen again and we need to ensure we make best use of the aggregate amount of underspend that there is. If it be £33 million or £35 million it all must go into the Stabilisation Fund. The important thing as well, it is something that we cannot afford to touch, we need to increase the Stabilisation Fund value over the next 3 to 5 years. We have to get ourselves into a position where we were during the days of when Deputy Ozouf was the Minister for Treasury and Resources because, as Minister for Treasury and Resources, he anticipated a structural deficit. What he was doing back then was he was ensuring that there were monies available to address any shortfalls in funding. For far too long what we have seen is a culture where growth bids are approved and we tend to forget about the reserve funds. Why? Because politicians are focused on delivering policies all the time but we have to think about the broader aspect of the public sector and public finances and our future generation because if we are not attentive to our reserve funds, then there could be implications for our future generations. We do not want to see them be burdened with debt, that is the most important thing. Even with the hospital

borrowing, that itself is going to be a major thing for the Island and of course fiscally we will, as a States Assembly, be placed under considerable pressure. It is important that I just touch on one thing here. When I asked a question of the Minister for Treasury and Resources about the number of growth bids, and this is one of the issues I have in recent history in the States Assembly, she responded to my question about the number of growth bids since 2020 and £276 million has been approved, and that excludes pay awards and inflation. We are going down this trajectory; it is the wrong way to go, it really is, because some of the monies that were approved there, they could have quite easily been utilised, be transferred to the Stabilisation Fund. It would also give us a bit of flexibility. If the economy does contract then we could have had a sufficient fund in the Stabilisation Fund where we could have depleted it. We also have to bear in mind in depleting the Stabilisation Fund there must be a culture of replenishing the Stabilisation Fund, not neglecting the Stabilisation Fund. It has happened far too often and there has not been a commitment to make transfers to the fund. I also want to just reiterate one point that I have already mentioned in the debate, and that is looking at the amounts of underspends over previous years. On my screen before me there has been 6 years where I have seen underspends exceed £25 million; however, there are 3 years where I was unable to get the data because it was not available to me. I think that is very important that we do provide the Assembly with a bit more flexibility. We should not be rigid and just say: "Let us cap the transfer to £25 million." Why are we capping transfers to a fund that is already depleted because £25 million itself is not going to be sufficient enough. We need to maximise those transfers and we need to do it now.

The Bailiff:

Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]** Does any Member wish to speak on the proposition?

2.1.1 Deputy E. Millar of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

As is the case with Deputy Andrews' proposition, P.22, I do not intend to criticise Deputy Andrews' intent of purpose which is well placed. Indeed, the Deputy has proposed something that we already have provision for in the Government Plan so there is not fundamental disagreement on the issue at hand. The Assembly has no need to take this decision and that is why I do not support it. Part (f) of the Government Plan 2024-2027 adopted by this Assembly in December 2023 enables almost exactly what the Deputy is seeking, so this proposition is unnecessary; that could have caused an argument for supporting it. On that basis one could ask: "What harm can this proposition do given that the Assembly has already agreed to it?" I am afraid that I do not believe we should get into the habit of approving what are essentially unnecessary propositions which are more properly covered elsewhere, such as in the Government Plan. Propositions adopted by this Assembly should be meaningful, I believe, and impactful and not merely seek further agreement for something which the Assembly has already approved. It goes further than that because the proposition will impose additional and unnecessary bureaucracy and take up time and resource that we do not need to expend. It would require the Minister for Treasury and Resources to lodge a proposition and the Assembly to debate that proposition when no such proposition or further debate is necessary. As I have said, this matter has already been covered in the Government Plan and approved by the Assembly. I know in my comment that we may also need to use any underspends towards meeting the commitment for additional funding to support the agricultural industry which is also a decision of this Assembly. Once that commitment is met and it is a competing priority, the immediate focus will be to rebuild the Stabilisation Fund, and that is clearly something that my team are looking at in terms of how we can put additional funding into the Stabilisation Fund. These are decisions of the Assembly which we respect. I would also just confirm for the avoidance of any doubt that the Treasury team and Ministers also pay very close attention to F.P.P. (Fiscal Policy Panel) reports, and we do think very carefully about the Stabilisation Fund, and all our funds. I would simply add this, as I have said in Scrutiny and I will say it probably countless times from now, we all have our part to play in managing Government spend. The Assembly has just supported a proposition which will require some element

of cost while government officials go away and go through the list of asks in the cannabis proposition; that costs money. Every time you bring a proposition that requires Government to do something or to spend money we are adding to the competing priorities that we all face in terms of putting money into the Stabilisation Fund or the Strategic Reserve or any other purposes that we wish to spend. No further proposition of the Minister or approval of the Assembly is required to meet the objectives of this proposition. It is, therefore, unnecessary and I ask Members to reject it on that basis.

2.1.2 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North:

I will be very, very short. I would like to ask the proposer to clarify in his closing speech, we do have 2 propositions in front of us from Deputy Andrews: one about the Strategic Reserve, which we will debate later, and one about the Stabilisation Fund. As we all agreed in December 2023, £25 million from underspend would go to the Stabilisation Fund. It has been agreed by the Assembly and we really do not need to debate it. Would the proposer explain: is he seeking that any underspend above £25 million would need to be reallocated to the Stabilisation Fund if this is the intention of the proposition?

[10:30]

If it is an intention of the proposition, why is the proposer proposing or think that any underspend above £25 million after we have met all necessary ... we will have a deficit in-house and we will need to cover the deficit in-house. We would have other priorities before we finalise the year; we know what is happening through the proposition. If any more funds remain above £25 million, why do they need to go to the Stabilisation Fund and not to the Strategic Reserve, for example? I just would like to have these clarifications in his closing speech to make my decision about his proposition.

2.1.3 Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I will keep this brief. I would like to thank the Minister for Treasury and Resources for her brief, yet very comprehensive, answer to this. I rise purely because we have 2 debates today from the Deputy on financing matters which are fairly significant in the latter and already agreed by the States in the former. This is really an ask for the States Assembly in general. I really like the words “meaningful and impactful proposition” from the Minister for Treasury and Resources. The Deputy, like many of us, is incredibly concerned about the Island’s long-term financing but I do not believe these propositions are the way we are going to solve this. I think, to quote the Deputy from earlier, such large decisions are usually brought forward by the Executive. Well in this case they were and I would really ask the Deputy, given the collective interest in finances of the public, not to make this a single proposition, a piecemeal approach, to engage as much with States Members out of the Assembly. Perhaps we could organise an in-committee debate, although I watch perhaps some Members shake their heads at that, but a really structured in-committee debate on the purpose of funds, the direction we are taking between investing, saving and spending now. I think it is a really useful debate and far more useful than what we are debating today.

2.1.4 Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier South:

The Minister for Treasury and Resources has already explained some very good reasons for why this proposition ought to be rejected by the Assembly and I wanted to add an extra one into that, and specifically speaking from Reform Jersey’s perspective on this. One reason why this proposition must be opposed is because it risks austerity through the back door. Underspends occur because through the year things did not exactly go as predicted and some departments will spend less than they thought they would; at the same time, some departments will spend more than they thought they would. To determine right from this stage that we will have less flexibility on the reallocation of those funds and risk saying to some departments: “If you overspend, tough luck, you have got to cut back in other areas” that is absolutely unconscionable and, if I may say, speaking as the leader of a

social democratic party, it is an unconscionable thing to do from a social democratic point of view where we want decently-run public finances that service our public services properly. That means that we need the flexibility as described by the Minister for Treasury and Resources when it comes towards the end of this year to manage these spends properly and most effectively on behalf of the public and not make these sorts of determinations so early on which could have the unintended consequence of harming our services and delivering austerity through the back door. This Assembly has tried austerity before, it does not work, and we should not go back to those days.

The Bailiff:

Does any other Member wish to speak on this proposition? If no other Member wishes to speak, then I close the debate and call upon Deputy Andrews to respond.

2.1.5 Deputy M.B. Andrews:

I thank all Members who have contributed to this debate. I will just respond to Deputy Gardiner's comments when she spoke about why the need to make transfers to the Stabilisation Fund compared to the Strategic Reserve Fund and why that should be a priority. The reason being is because there is less than £1 million in the Stabilisation Fund and due to there being nothing in the Stabilisation Fund or nothing of any value to really provide any contribution to the economy during a downturn, there is a need to replenish it. As I said earlier on in my speech, for far too long the Stabilisation Fund has been neglected and of course there are competing priorities politically. I understand with the Council of Ministers often there will be contentious debates about how we are going to be approving funds and how much growth bid, for instance, is going to be approved. Potentially there might even be discussions about cuts being made. I think it is also important to note as well that the Stabilisation Fund is in a very bad place and it does not really have much use. We have a Stabilisation Fund that exists but we cannot utilise it and therefore we have to go to the Consolidated Fund or potentially the Strategic Reserve in the case where we see a negative output gap within the economy. The Government is going to have to intervene by drawing down funds in other areas when the whole purpose of the Stabilisation Fund is that we do have funds in it that are specifically used for that purpose. I think it is also important to mention as well that with Deputy Mézec alluding to the word "austerity", departments, if they have managed to spend the money they have within their budget and there happens to be a surplus available, then I think it would be prudent that we ensure that underspends are transferred into the Stabilisation Fund because at least we do have a cushion. In the event that the economy contracts the Stabilisation Fund potentially can be utilised but I do think it would be maybe premature if we are only looking at one or 2 or maybe even 3 calendar years, to then be depleting the Stabilisation Fund when first of all we need to make sure that we are rebuilding the Stabilisation Fund. As far as I am concerned, if we are looking at just setting a cap as to how much can be transferred into the Stabilisation Fund of no more than £25 million, that is totally insufficient, in my view. I think if there are any surplus funds available then the funds ought to be transferred into the Stabilisation Fund because we cannot allow the fund to be neglected the way it is. Of course with our election cycles happening every 4 years, it is often something that tends to be forgotten about. A new Council of Ministers will come into Government, they will have their own priorities, and even if the prior Council of Ministers had a priority of making sure transfers were made to the Stabilisation Fund or the Strategic Reserve, often that will not be the case when the new Council of Ministers takes office because they have their own policies that they want to deliver. I understand politically politicians do want to deliver on behalf of the public; however, there is also an important part of being a politician and that is to ensure that public finances are in a good place. Unfortunately, as we see with both the Strategic Reserve and the Stabilisation Fund, both of them happen to not be in a very good place. Therefore, I think it is a matter of urgency that we do ensure, for this year anyway, that underspends at an aggregate level are transferred into the Stabilisation Fund to build the fund towards a level where it should be at during the days of when Deputy Ozouf was Minister

for Treasury and Resources. I think I have said what I need to say and I call for the appel. Thank you.

The Bailiff:

Very well, the appel is called for. I invite Members to return their seats and I ask the Greffier to open the voting and Members to vote. If Members have had the opportunity of casting their vote, I ask the Greffier to close the voting. The proposition has been defeated: one vote pour; 42 votes contre; no abstentions.

POUR: 1	CONTRE: 42	ABSTAIN: 0
Deputy M.B. Andrews	Connétable of St. Brelade	
	Connétable of St. Martin	
	Connétable of St. John	
	Connétable of Grouville	
	Connétable of St. Ouen	
	Connétable of St. Mary	
	Connétable of St. Saviour	
	Deputy G.P. Southern	
	Deputy C.F. Labey	
	Deputy M. Tadier	
	Deputy S.G. Luce	
	Deputy L.M.C. Doublet	
	Deputy K.F. Morel	
	Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat	
	Deputy S.M. Ahier	
	Deputy R.J. Ward	
	Deputy C.S. Alves	
	Deputy I. Gardiner (H)	
	Deputy I.J. Gorst	
	Deputy L.J. Farnham	
	Deputy K.L. Moore	
	Deputy S.Y. Mézec	
	Deputy Sir P.M. Bailhache	
	Deputy T.A. Coles	
	Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée	
	Deputy D.J. Warr	
	Deputy H.M. Miles	
	Deputy M.R. Scott	

	Deputy J. Renouf		
	Deputy C.D. Curtis		
	Deputy L.V. Feltham		
	Deputy R.E. Binet		
	Deputy H.L. Jeune		
	Deputy M.E. Millar		
	Deputy A. Howell		
	Deputy T.J.A. Binet		
	Deputy M.R. Ferey		
	Deputy R.S. Kovacs		
	Deputy A.F. Curtis		
	Deputy B. Ward		
	Deputy K.M. Wilson		
	Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson		

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

Deputy Andrews voted pour.

3. Affordable and right-size housing provision on the Waterfront (P.37/2024) - as amended (P.37/2024 Amd.)

The Bailiff:

The next item is Affordable and right-size housing provision on the Waterfront, P.37, lodged by Deputy Miles. The main responder will be the Minister for Treasury and Resources. Deputy, there is an amendment lodged by the Council of Ministers, are you accepting that amendment or ...

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade:

Yes, I am accepting the amendment.

The Bailiff:

Very well, and Members agree that we can read the proposition as amended? Yes? Very well, I ask the Greffier to read the proposition as amended.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The States are asked to decide whether they are of opinion - to request the Minister for Treasury and Resources, as shareholder representative, to instruct the States of Jersey Development Company that, in any new proposals or plans for housing developments on the Waterfront by the States of Jersey Development Company (a) any such proposals must include a minimum provision of no less than 50 per cent of the homes to be offered with an assisted purchase product for first-time buyers, where the phasing of delivery is agreed by the Minister for Housing and the Regeneration Steering Group; and (b) any such proposals must include a minimum of 15 per cent of housing designed to encourage and enable Islanders who are looking to right-size, in line with the delivery of the right-sizing policy set out in R.85/2024, where the phasing of delivery is agreed by the Minister for Housing and the Regeneration Steering Group.

3.1 Deputy H. Miles:

When we stood for election 2 years ago Members will know that across the Island housing was probably the biggest issue that came up on the doorstep. In St. Brelade young people were telling me that they had little or no hope of buying their first home and were increasingly thinking that their future lay elsewhere. This was of equal concern to parents and grandparents who do not want their families to have to move away from Jersey because it is too expensive to buy a home and raise a family here. We all heard, and continue to hear, the voices of our parishioners and we ourselves in this Assembly are a mixture of young people, parents and grandparents who are all concerned for the well-being and prosperity of our current and future generations. One way or another the housing crisis impacts us all, but it is a complex and multi-faceted issue. It is largely about the availability of affordable housing but it is not only about affordability but about suitability as this proposition recognises. The question 2 years ago on the doorstep and the question that remains now is: what are we going to do about it? Over the last 2 years significant efforts have been made by the previous Minister for Housing and continued by the present Minister for Housing to tackle the challenges that Islanders face. Most recently, and probably most encouragingly, has been the First Step assisted home ownership scheme which is now bearing fruit and for which both Deputy Warr and Deputy Mézec deserve credit. As I recognise in my report, at South Hill Ministers and the States of Jersey Development Company have managed to secure 25 per cent of the units for shared equity affordable housing which again is positive, so it is not all doom and gloom and I do not want to suggest otherwise. There is more that we can do and more we must do, a point which I think is recognised across the Assembly. In 2022 I made a number of manifesto commitments aimed at helping to address the housing crisis. I was not alone. Members will have made their own commitments in recognition of the challenge we face and the new Common Strategic Policy clearly sets out a commitment to building more affordable homes. This proposition is aimed at furthering those commitments which I made to the parishioners of St. Brelade, and which I hope were part of the reason I was elected. I represent many constituents who purchased their family home through the old States Loan Scheme in the 1970s; indeed, I am a child of that generation. My parents had a States loan to buy our first home. When I was growing up I never had to worry that I would have to leave the Island in order to get on to the housing ladder and raise a family. Sadly, this is not the case for the current generation and I do not want it to be the case for them or for the next. Since I lodged this proposition I have been grateful to Ministers and officials, other colleagues in the Assembly, residents at the Waterfront, and the wider public for their messages and engagement with me, both where they have agreed and disagreed with me. I am also grateful to the representatives of the States of Jersey Development Company for their time. I will touch on that engagement in more detail where it is relevant as I move through the speech. It is important to recognise the role of the Minister for Housing. When lodging this proposition I referenced his previous similar efforts as a Back-Bencher and I was aware of how he fared in 2021. This time the Minister and, as far as I can tell, the Government generally and the S.o.J.D.C. (States of Jersey Development Company) have not simply dismissed this proposition or sought to wreck it. They have engaged and tried to find a way to make it work. They have helped me and us to achieve the objective I had in mind, and I am very grateful for that. I think we have succeeded and that is why I accepted the C.O.M. (Council of Ministers) amendment. If it is acceptable to the Assembly, this proposition will represent a level of commitment to support first-time buyers with affordable purchases on the Waterfront which has not been made previously. It introduces for the first time in that area of town a commitment to a suitable right-sizing provision to support downsizers or last-time buyers which is another aspect of our housing needs which we must not ignore. In the report accompanying my proposition I make quite a few comments about the Waterfront. I refer to it as one of the greatest disappointments in Jersey's modern history as it has been so far in the view of many Islanders and the lack of identity, community and place that it suffers.

[10:45]

Quite rightly, a number of Waterfront residents have contacted me, and I have been delighted to go to the Waterfront and meet them in the days leading up to this debate. They have offered balanced and informed insight as to the current state of the Waterfront and its future development. Those I met recognised the need for affordable housing, they see the value of right-sizing but they most certainly do not feel the lack of community which I referenced. It was really encouraging to meet them and they are rightly proud of where they live. That is why I spoke also in my proposition about opportunity. The Waterfront remains a great opportunity for Jersey and one which can still be a success for Islanders. The amended provision I put forward ensures that 50 per cent of the accommodation built in future developments on the Waterfront, which could be up to 500 homes, are available to first-time buyers within an assisted purchased product. That might be a shared equity scheme or a deposit support payment scheme. The S.o.J.D.C. have proven in both respects that they can deliver these in respect of their properties and I am confident they can do so again. I recognise that this balance is important. Not every first-time buyer wants or needs a shared equity purchase. Many are already paying very high rents and can afford the mortgage but saving for a deposit is a frustratingly unattainable challenge. Other young professional first-time buyers may just miss out on the assisted purchase schemes due to their combined level of income and some will be fortunate enough to be supported by the “bank of Mum and Dad” and it is important that we do not exclude those buyers. In the report to the Government’s amendment, an indication has been given towards a minimum of 15 per cent properties being sold with a shared equity scheme and a minimum of 35 per cent offered with a deposit payment scheme. The Minister and I did discuss putting these figures into the wording of the proposition but we agreed not to. I think that gives necessary flexibility, firstly, to go further if we can beyond 50 per cent and, secondly, to alter the balance if necessary within that 50 per cent. It might be at the time homes become available that the balance of shared equity to deposit support schemes needs to change depending on market conditions. This proposition allows for that flexibility and that will benefit first-time buyers with their needs at the time. The aspect of this proposition which is different to past versions on this subject is the addition of a right-sizing provision. It is a subject I feel quite strongly about, and again it is something I heard regularly from the public during the election. I recognise though that in some quarters it has raised eyebrows and others have been sceptical as to the actual appetite for it. I have been told that the Waterfront is the wrong place for down-sizing or right-sizing and that nobody will want to move there. Well that certainly was not the view of the residents I met who themselves had downsized to the Waterfront from a large property in St. Clement. They love the location, they no longer need to use the car, they said it was the best decision they have made. They told me everything is close by, including doctors, dentists, the hospital, food shops, coffee shops and town. The Marina Gardens are a hive of activity, children playing, dogs being walked, fitness classes for all types being conducted. There is no shortage of activity here. The gardens are incredibly well-maintained thanks to S.o.J.D.C.’s contract gardeners: “We hardly ever need to drive anywhere. In my block alone we now have a number of people that get around on mobility scooters, it is that easy to get around and it was the loss of mobility that was one of our considerations when we decided to move here.” He made it clear that he was not alone, either. I have also been told that people will want to stay close to their existing home or in the Parish in which they live. I can completely understand that but we must not forget that one-third of the Island lives in St. Helier, so I am sure that there will be people in St. Helier who would be happy to voluntarily downsize to another part of their own Parish. The evidence from past schemes in other Parishes is clear: down-sizing villages, if designed well, are always overwhelmingly popular, and that is the challenge we need to meet. I cited several examples in the report but they bear repeating: Hameau de la Mer in St. Clement, L’Hermitage in St. Peter, Tabor Park in St. Brelade and Langtry Gardens in St. Saviour. The proposal for a 15 per cent downsize provision, probably between 100 to 150 homes, is consistent with the recently-published right-sizing policy; indeed, I waited for this policy to be published before lodging this proposition. It specifically references S.o.J.D.C.’s future housing developments and the need to encourage suitable right-sizing packages. With plans back at the drawing board stage there is ample opportunity to create a right-sizing provision on the

Waterfront that is attractive and highly sought over with the appropriate density and square footage adding to the vibrancy and community of the area which we are all seeking to further encourage. Before I move the proposition I want to say a few words on the public realm aspect of the Waterfront. In my proposition I emphasise the need to put our housing needs first and I do not recoil from that; however, I think the narrative around public realms is misplaced. Of course we need to continually invest in our public realm and we need housing schemes which create attractive communities and that in turn needs public realm investment but there needs to be clarity in the plans about what is meant by public realm. Is it parks, pools and gardens or is it shoreline management, flood defences and basic standard infrastructure? Following my engagement over the past few weeks, including with the Minister, we have a proposition which can deliver the assisted purchase schemes for housing on the Waterfront and maintain the public realm investment that forms part of that development. To close, I ask Members to give hope to Islanders of all ages and to show that as their representatives we can both talk the talk and walk the walk in addressing their housing needs and the housing crisis. There is no bigger challenge than housing our Islanders and this site represents our opportunity to send a positive message and give hope to Islanders. I move the proposition and I look forward to the debate.

The Bailiff:

Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]** Does any Member wish to speak on the proposition?

3.1.1 Deputy E. Millar:

I am grateful to Deputy Miles for accepting the Council of Ministers' amendment ... sorry, I should say I rise to speak as the named Minister in the proposition. I share the Deputy's desire for S.o.J.D.C. to contribute to the construction of a range of housing that will meet the aspirations of all Islanders. I do not believe, however, that S.o.J.D.C. should simply build apartment blocks with no associated public realm and infrastructure as I think the Deputy now accepts. To do so would infringe on their whole reason for being. P.73/2010 makes it clear the S.o.J.D.C. are not simply house builders but developers with a strong emphasis on regeneration. It is for that reason that the Ministerial Oversight Group that gives direction to S.o.J.D.C. is named the Regeneration Steering Group. This Assembly in previous debates has recognised that ultimately development of the Waterfront has to be commercially viable, it should have a mix of housing types, including providing Islanders with opportunities to get on the housing ladder, and have a significant investment in infrastructure and public realm. That requires a delicate and difficult balancing act to ensure that all of these requirements can be met. The overall objective is not simply to construct X number of additional housing units but to construct a development on the Waterfront that is a quality destination, that is not divorced from the town centre, that has public realm of which we can all be proud and that also happens to have housing within it. This amendment from C.O.M. seeks to balance all these requirements to give S.o.J.D.C. a sufficient steer and to give Members confidence that the Regeneration Steering Group can be trusted to provide oversight of these activities and the plans of S.o.J.D.C. I urge Members to approve the proposition as amended and support S.o.J.D.C. to ultimately deliver a Waterfront that aligns with community expectations and one which we will all want to visit.

3.1.2 Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South:

I just make one little observation, I notice he is not in the Assembly room at this moment in time, but I would be very interested to hear the views of Constable Crowcroft to this proposition; I hope he has not been gagged to talk. I thank Deputy Miles for her proposition and its intent to do good for the people of the Island. We see the success of the First Step scheme that my housing team developed in 2023 and which has been successfully delivered in 2024.

The Bailiff:

Deputy Warr, on reflection I am not sure you can suggest that a Member has been gagged unless you mean by another Member of the Assembly. That seems to me to be potentially offensive, both to the Member it is suggested has been gagged, and the suggestion that other Members may either collectively or individually have sought to gag them. I realise you did not point the finger at anyone in the latter category but it seems to me for both reasons that is not parliamentary, so would you please withdraw it?

Deputy D.J. Warr:

I apologise for that commentary. I shall carry on. The scheme clearly demonstrates that for a good number of Islanders the only way they will get to own a home of their own is with some form of assistance. In many cases that will be with help from the bank of Mum and Dad, as highlighted by Deputy Miles, but for those less fortunate, schemes such as Andium Homebuy and First Step help facilitate that first milestone. I would remind Members that the requirement to deliver affordable homes is baked into the Bridging Island Plan through policies H5 and H6, which determine that developments of 50 homes or more have to offer a minimum of 15 per cent as affordable. The Bridging Island Plan also proposes that 460 homes are built on rezoned fields made up of 373 affordable homes and 87 for supported living. On top of that we also have the Constable Jackson amendment to the Bridging Island Plan around housing mix. This was passed by the Assembly and makes sure that all rezoned redevelopments have a proportion of smaller homes to enable right-sizing. There is a lot of policy in place that looks to deliver both affordable homes and right-sizing options. It begs the question: on what evidence have the 50 per cent and 15 per cent affordable/right-sizer homes in the proposition been arrived at? I hope in her response Deputy Miles will be able to address that question. It is an important question and I point Members to the economic impact statement in the amended proposition from the Economics Unit. It states in general competitive markets deliver the best outcomes. Anything that prevents a market from fully functioning, e.g. through the segregation of submarkets and artificial divisions, reduces competition and risks suboptimal outcomes. This proposition creates artificial divisions by designating a proportion of the development for 2 different types of buyers. Sometimes to correct a market failure, such interventions can be optimal, but it is not clear that there is a market failure affecting first-time buyers or right-sizers. The report goes on to say: "This proposition is likely to affect prices and/or the profitability of the development. It might lead to an excess supply of first-time buyer flats and of flats for right-sizers and push up the prices of flats on the open market. In extremis it could make the development uneconomic." These are the unintended consequences when Governments make significant interventions in the housing market. In my speech to the Assembly earlier this year, I spoke to the need to make a holistic approach to housing, the need for a long-term vision, rather than constant short-term tinkering. As part of that thinking, I wanted to get a project going around housing data intelligence. If I were the Minister for Housing, this project would be well underway. We use data to make these types of decision, not dogma. We urgently need a serious long-term housing strategy that is sustainable and helps us make better policy choices to manage what is ultimately a complex market issue. I would be interested to hear from the Minister for Housing as to where he is on that journey. Next I want to turn to some of the commentary within the proposition that repeats many of the old tropes that dogged both the S.o.J.D.C. and the Waterfront. I appreciate that the Deputy has addressed some of these points. She states in her proposition: "While the overall Waterfront development has been one of the greatest disappointments in Jersey's modern history, we have a chance to write a new chapter of which we can so be proud." Currently, the Waterfront still lacks a sense of place, community and vibrancy. I do appreciate that the Deputy has addressed that commentary. Therefore, I am not going to repeat a number of the points made by, I understand, the residents who she spoke to. The commentary I would like to pull forward though is we are building a sense of community through the Waterfront Residents Association Meetings. I have met so many

people living at Castle Quay and Horizon by simply walking around Marina Gardens, stopping for a chat.

[11:00]

People best-placed to comment on the vibrancy of the Waterfront are those of us that live here. I have yet to hear anyone that lives here saying that they do not enjoy the place. Most of those that criticise the Waterfront and the apartments do not live here and have no first-hand experience to back up their comments. I would add that the Residents Association has not only managed to get the underpass reopened, but has also pushed for an update of street lighting and road crossings. The residents care about their environment and because of that engagement it is probably one of the most progressive parts of St. Helier. I will finish this section on my speech with a final testimonial from a Miss L: "I love living at Horizon. It is a joy to come home and I see my neighbours feel the same. The great glazing that gives me amazing views of the Waterfront Gardens and loads of natural light makes me feel like I am on holiday every day. It is a wonderful place to live and to be able to walk around and be so close to town." I have to say, that is such a refreshing contrast to the commentary pedalled in 2023 by the current Minister for Housing and his fellow Deputy, Deputy Tadier. I want to turn briefly to the functioning of and perceptions around the S.o.J.D.C. I quote from the Government's response, and I am interested to see the Minister for Treasury and Resources' commentary. Deputy Miles states elsewhere in her report that infrastructure and public realm improvements are the duty for Government to fund anyway. This is not true. There is a long history of developers, both public and private, providing infrastructure and public realm as part of new large-scale developments. Once again, myth meets facts. The myth that S.o.J.D.C. is not responsible for delivering public realm, that they do not need to make a profit because others are responsible for public realm. The facts are that S.o.J.D.C. only received £40 million of assets when it was set up. That contrasts with the £678 million that was made to Andium on inception. The S.o.J.D.C., as it says on their website, is the Government of Jersey's partner for regeneration and strategic property development. It was never intended to be a social housing provider. In that respect, it has done a pretty good job. The S.o.J.D.C. have generated cumulative returns of £52.3 million from their £40-million asset base since 2012 and on average have made an annual return of 12.3 per cent, comprising of £10.8 million in dividends, £3.3 million invested in public infrastructure, £3.2 million invested in community projects; and £35 million invested in future development projects. No one is more aware of the benefits S.o.J.D.C. bring to this Island than the Constable of St. Helier. I hope he gets the opportunity to speak in this debate. I am sure he is furious at the thought of a major development taking place on the Waterfront that brings no benefit or could bring no benefit to the rest of St. Helier. This brings me on to the final part of this speech, and it is a subject that is close to the heart of the Constable of St. Helier, that of what he so eloquently called, back in June 2017, town cramming. Edinburgh House, Cyril Le Marquand Court, Northern Quarter, The Limes, The Mayfair, and finally the Ann Street Brewery site have combined created hundreds of new homes in St. Helier, thanks to the decision of this Assembly to densify town so that our countryside can remain green. That decision on paper made sense. However, as time has gone on, and it is particularly noticeable at the Havre des Pas Improvement Group meetings there is a sense that enough is enough. It is time other parts of the Island took on their share of the housing burden. Did Deputy Miles talk to the Constable about her vision of the Waterfront before bringing forward her proposition? Again, I look forward to hearing her response. All the supplementary planning guidance for the rezoned greenfield sites are in place. That is well ahead of anything that is going to be delivered on the Waterfront. An existing policy meets with the requests made by Deputy Miles. I also remind her that we have 900 vacant homes scattered throughout the Island that probably do not require much planning permission either. If she worked with the Constables and could persuade the current Minister for Housing to reactivate the policy, that is in round numbers, 3,360 homes, without even touching the Waterfront. Finally, Members should read the reasons for the amendment really carefully. In an effort to meet Deputy Miles' 50 per cent, a split has been offered of 15 per cent shared equity and 35 per cent homes

provided with an S.o.J.D.C. deposit payment scheme. This is very different to a deposit loan scheme. While the 15 per cent is simply in line with policy H6, the 35 per cent element has little to do with reducing the headline price of a home. It simply encourages people to save up their deposit while their home is being built. This is very much the same scheme as was used on the Horizon development. I do not see how that meets the affordable home requirement of Deputy Miles' original proposition. Trying to save while also paying rent does not sound that helpful and probably wrecks the Deputy's original intent. Maybe this is a new definition of affordability that I have missed. I will support the amendment as it minimises the risk of the future viability of S.o.J.D.C. I would though remind those Members with rezoned sites in their Parishes to get on and develop them if they truly want to see an end to the housing crisis.

3.1.3 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I am glad that we have heard from a former Minister for Housing. I am sure we are going to hear from the current Minister for Housing in a moment. This proposition today and the amendments that we have are very exciting. I commend Deputy Miles for bringing this. I am very happy to support my St. Brelade colleague in this as well. The first thing I want to say is that she is correct in the sense that many people of my parents' generation did also benefit from the States loan scheme. It is one that made a difference between having an experience in Jersey which would have been the other side of the margin, because what I do want to say is that for a lot of people in my parents' generation, when we were growing up, life was still marginal. It was not always easy to know where the money was going to come from for all the expenses that you have with 4 children and to maintain your house and pay off your loan. The security that you had of knowing that you had a secure home, one that you could come back to, were not going to get evicted from it, and could invest in by the time you retired. I remember my dad timed it right so that when he retired he had paid off the house. After that it was a great relief for him and the family. It is important that we do not buy into this doctrine. The former speaker spoke of dogma. There has been a rise in dogma that the States and the Government should not get involved in the market at all. However, the older generation in Jersey know that there is a place for state intervention, when it has a clear intent and when it is designed to help people who are working hard in the Island to make their life more manageable. This is where I slightly disagree; in terms of maybe it is putting the cart before the horse. The approach from the former Minister for Housing, if I understood correctly, is that we should not form a vision until we have all the data. We can get bogged down with data, of course, and spend 2, 4, probably 10 years collecting data and will still not have enough data to decide what to do with that. Data statistics, as we know, can prove different things for different people. What is fundamental is that we have a clear vision. Hopefully the Government has a clear vision, but the States Assembly also has a clear vision, even if it is a high level one, about what kind of Jersey they want to see and what kind of housing situation they want to see for people who live in Jersey. It might be something as high level as saying we want to make sure that at the end of the day people, whether they are renting or buying, do not have to use such a high proportion of their earned income, so that when they are left with their disposable income they do not have enough to pay bills, pay for food, or to pay potentially for their children's school uniforms. That, unfortunately, is something that we are seeing more increasingly in Jersey, despite the fact that in the same breath we often say that Jersey is an affluent society and that we are very lucky to be living here. The second point is that I am really pleased that Deputy Miles has highlighted an issue which does come up very often. It came up in one of my surgeries only a couple of months ago when a lady from, again, a well-established family of my parents' generation and the children of my generation. She said: "We have a 3-bedroom house in one of the estates in the top part of St. Brelade. We want to move out. We would like to sell that. I would like to downsize. I am quite happy to rent somewhere. It would be great if there were some schemes around. But it is not worth me selling my 3-bedroom house, which the children have now left, so I am there just with my partner, because there is nowhere for me to go." Others would like to buy, but they are looking around thinking why on earth would you sell a 3-bedroom house wherever in the

Island to downsize to potentially a 2-bedroom apartment which is more expensive and does not have the outdoor space or the storage space for some of the things that you may have accumulated over 70 years of living in Jersey. This does very much seek to tackle that issue. Of course it is always going to be possible for people to pick homes and say: “Why exactly these percentages?” I am sure the Deputy will give us some reasons for that, but you have to start somewhere and you have to decide what is reasonable and what the balance should be. I am also excited to know that the Minister for Housing ... I do not want to steal his thunder, but it is something that I was also looking at, is that we know in other places, for example in Wales, there is a scheme that already exists called Rent to Own. There are slightly different variations of this all around the world. In this particular scenario you rent a property, you pay the going rate for up to 5 years and then after 2 years you have the option to buy the property, or buy the home if we are going to appeal to Deputy Ward. When you do decide to buy it, you get 25 per cent back of the rent that you have accumulated over that period and 50 per cent of any uplift in the property value since the time you have moved in. These kinds of schemes are logical and fairly obvious, but they have eluded Governments up until this point to do that, because we have not had a Government that wants to intervene in a meaningful but measured way in the market to accept that the market cannot do everything, because the market does not produce fair outcomes. It is not designed to do that. It is not conscious. We should try out these schemes, which ultimately will be helping people living in our communities. Of course, the 50 per cent affordable homes is also very laudable. I am going to leave my comments there because I am not the Minister for Housing. I am reassured, and I am not just saying this as a party member, that this Government is taking housing matters from a more pragmatic stance. They are not being ideological about it. They are saying we have a broad coalition in the Council of Ministers, but we all have concerns about the needs of Islanders and here we have a very good example of now a Back-Bencher who has seen the Ministerial side, bringing forward constructive proposals that we should all be getting behind. We should be supporting the Minister for Housing and the Council of Ministers to deliver this constructively.

3.1.4 Deputy M.R. Scott:

I applaud Deputy Miles for honouring a commitment at the election. I am pleased to hear of the positive feedback she has had in her dealings with the Council of Ministers. I am going to ask if she might address some matters in her summing-up speech which will be of interest to the constituents of the constituency that we both represent. I, likewise, had received feedback from constituents with concerns regarding right-sizing. While I think this proposition has lots of positives about it, I have a slight concern that it may not address some of the concerns that were raised in my constituency and might have consequences for it if certain things are not addressed. In that respect, I acknowledge what has been said by Deputy Warr regarding data and the tendency to be town-centric and trying to avoid cramming in town.

[11:15]

It is important that young people have places to buy, but my particular focus has been on the people who are looking to sell and continue to live in St. Brelade. We do not really have a housing policy, as far as I can see, that enables that. What we have now is something on the table that says you can move from St. Brelade and right-size or downsize into St. Helier. That might not be what people want to do. It may not be enough to free certain houses. Indeed, when it comes to buying property in St. Brelade, many people will say you do not buy a house in St. Brelade if it is over a certain age, you buy a project. Most of them need to be modernised and there is the whole expense of that. Many people will not modernise before selling because they do not know what the buyer will want. We have a Mexican standoff going on in St. Brelade. The concern is that even if we have some success in moving people from St. Brelade into town, then what happens to the properties that are freed up? Will they necessarily be converted into smaller units to enable right-sizing? Or will, because it is often more profitable for developers, it be developed as a luxury mansion. Therefore, that does not

perhaps achieve the objective. When we talk about these percentages, what are the numbers of people in St. Brelade who are looking to downsize within the Parish? Does the Deputy know or have any proposals in terms of finding out? I personally would be interested in knowing. It is something that the Deputies and Constable need to explore. In this respect, I should acknowledge the work that the Constable has done already in introducing and working on the concept of right-sizing. There is a policy in the Island Plan. What is in the Island Plan is not enough, however, in terms of delivery; it is just principles. How does the Deputy propose to follow up and address these particular areas of concern? I am sure all the Parish representatives would be interested in participating in any projects she proposes in that respect.

3.1.5 Deputy A.F. Curtis:

I do not have a huge amount to add to this proposition, but I do want to reflect on what Deputy Miles and the proposition is asking the Assembly's approval for. It refers to right-sizing and it refers to the assisted purchase products for first-time buyers. It is one of suitability and one of producing the right housing that Jersey needs right now. I should say, firstly, I have always struggled with zoning of affordable housing. To me, promoting the use of assisted purchase products and shared equity too much is only postponing the eventual day we have to address that the open market cost of housing is too high and that Government should be looking at the tools needed to intervene there. Moving beyond that, this is about what is suitable, what is attractive for Jersey residents, whether first-time buyers or right-sizers. In the report, Deputy Miles references estates such as Hameau de la Mer, L'Hermitage Gardens and Tabor Park and says: "The Waterfront development presents an opportunity for providing this type of accommodation." Members may want some context on these developments. These developments have open circulation spaces outside. They have good quality private amenity space and plenty of access to natural light. In fact, on my first day knocking on doors for the election, I timidly knocked around Hameau de la Mer as my first location and I was welcomed into a ground-floor 2-bedroom unit. The person who moved in had right-sized into that unit. They had had a good few years there already and they were ready to make their final move to a one-bed. They said: "I cannot." I said: "Why?" They said: "There is no housing which is one-bedroom that provides what I have here." I have south-facing light. I am on the ground floor and I have a small terrace/garden outside." I thought: "You are right, you know. No money in the world, no convenience of one less bedroom to tidy, will give that quality of life." I want to pre-empt any discussion about density and the density of development. It is true that the Waterfront is a site in St. Helier and that under St. Helier character appraisal the new Waterfront location is the only region that was identified by the author as having a low sensitivity to higher development. There is no point delivering higher-density development if it is not attractive to anyone. To reference a previous scheme, Members will know what the previous scheme looked like, there was a huge debate about the density of that site. The inspector agreed the most relevant number to use was that provided by the Planning Authority as having a density of housing of 185 dwellings per hectare. The Minister for the Environment published new density standards in 2023, which detailed minimum density standards. For smaller settlements that is 30 dwellings per hectare; local centres, 35 dwellings per hectare; Les Quennevais, 40 dwellings per hectare; and the town of St. Helier, 50 dwellings per hectare. Hameau de la Mer, a mixture of 1.5 to 3-storey dwellings and flats is 45 dwellings per hectare. Langtry Gardens would qualify to be built in St. Helier at 50 dwellings per hectare. Other developments like Walter Benest Court in Les Quennevais is 80 dwellings per hectare. Those who have driven past and seen the density of Le Clos Couriard in St. Helier will know that is less than what was proposed on the Waterfront at only 150 dwellings per hectare. For those interested, 230 dwellings per hectare is Westmount. I raise that because from a policy perspective, we have identified that 50 dwellings per hectare is the minimum. I do look around and want to highlight that this is described as the minimum, it can be exceeded. We have also heard sometimes, why should we accept the developer to exceed the minimum density standard. Because we have heard, what expectation would we have, or reality, of developers to exceed the minimum residential space

standards. I see no reason why we should be pushing for the highest form of development if no one will want to live there. The housing market has changed since different plans have come forward. We have to take into account new data. One may look to some of our larger development companies on the Island and look at the projects they have stopped developing, despite the fact they would deliver high density on the sites. The Apollo is sitting still; is one to think about. One developer has a development with 16 flats in it, with nice views, but albeit fairly dense. Months after being lifted, their floor plans show of the 16 flats, 15 of them have a little green dot showing they are still available. By that development, that developer is struggling to move property. At what point are we going to ask whether the stock being proposed and approved meets what Islanders want to live in. Jersey is not London or Paris. We do not have endless experiences of a large city on our front door. How many people will want to call Jersey home for 30, 40 or 50 years if the only option is some of the stock being built today? That is not to say it is not good stock for a time. All housing and homes should have a good place in someone's life. However, we are talking explicitly in this proposition about trying to create homes like we used to, some might say. Homes that someone can move into for 30 or 40 years or for their last 20 or 30 years and enjoy that without the pressure to think: "Where next?" I would like to touch lastly on data and talk about the fact that all data collected on housing recently discusses need. In 2018, there was the Objective Assessment of Housing Need. I believe it was collected in the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey. Statistics Jersey in 2023 published a future housing need study. When are we going to talk about housing want, housing desire, housing suitability, or housing inspiration? This is the stuff that will create sustainable communities; a duty that I believe is sustainable planning. This is something we all have to take into account in our decision-making. With that, this proposition is one step to a better approach on publicly-owned land, to making housing suitable. For that reason, I will support it.

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

I was going to make hopefully quite a short point, but I have added a couple more points as the speeches have gone on. It is something that I have said before, but I will make no apologies for saying it again. I will continue to say it every time these conversations come up. It is around the eligibility criteria for the assisted purchase schemes that the Government runs or that the Government has links to. We have ended up in the situation where we tie them all up together and we use the same eligibility criteria, which maybe makes things simple. It may make sense. It may be good policy to have everything travelling in one direction. It does concern me around one particular area and that is to do with property size. The current criteria, which after the Bridging Island Plan debate we have ended tying many Parish schemes into these same criteria, says that property size should reasonably reflect the needs of the household at the time of application. This, of course, is not looking towards the future for many people who may be thinking about having families and where their household needs may go in the future. I appreciate that there are arguments for why we need to house our population of today and the people who already exist, but I do think we are taking a very short-termism approach to that and we need to perhaps widen our horizons and our thinking somewhat to take a longer-term view. Personally I would favour having some thinking around that, whether it is that we do not tie all of our schemes to exactly the same criteria or whether we start to look at the criteria altogether; I do not know. Deputy Warr talked about long-term strategy. This is where I would value thinking on that subject matter as well. I do not believe we can continue to rely on the argument that you start on the property ladder in a one-bedroom property or a one-bedroom flat and then the market naturally allows you to progress in the future. We are all at the point where we are accepting that the housing market and prices are far too high and we cannot continue to pursue policies that rely on it getting higher and higher, so that people make money so they are able to afford the next step up on the property ladder. At a time when we have a reducing birth rate, the reaction to the numbers we have seen recently from many Islanders has been around housing and cost of living, it is a pertinent point. Another point that I have added while listening to some of the speeches is around public realm and the facilities. As the Minister for Treasury and Resources pointed out,

we have S.o.J.D.C. with certain obligations that are part of its very make-up. I do have a concern here that sometimes we try to force that issue far too much. I say that because of my own experience with conversations regarding public realm, particularly sport and leisure facilities, down at the Waterfront, while at the same time we are having a conversation about what could be the future of Fort Regent, which you can see from the Waterfront, which is not very far away. Sometimes we end up in a situation where these things should go down at the Waterfront because they need to tick that box that we provide X, Y and Z, but in reality there is a site not far away that needs some attention that many people believe, and there is evidence to suggest would be perfect for these things. We are not going to do both. We are an Island of 100,000 people with limited resources. I sometimes worry that we tie ourselves in far too tightly with what those public realm and facilities expectations are. That is one of the reasons why it does not concern me too much when people are starting to say things like: "A proposition like this may mean that there is less money to spend on some of these things." Yes, we have to make areas and build new communities nice for people to live in. They need facilities and they need things around them that make them want to build a community there, but we also do not have to force the issue.

[11:30]

Again, looking in that one box, we need to take a wider view sometimes. Finally, a point on down-sizing, it is to back up what Deputy Miles has said. Her experience of talking to people about down-sizing is very similar to mine. This is not about forcing people from their homes into small flats. It sounds very simple to say that, but it is important that we say that. Sometimes Islanders think when we talk about down-sizing in this Assembly that that is what we are trying to do. Most of us would agree that is absolutely not the case. We have to offer the right kind of alternatives. Done well, as Deputy Miles and others have said, they can be very effective in creating strong supportive communities. Deputy Miles referred to a number of such places that already exist. One of those is in my own constituency, a very large one. I have a family member who lives down there, so I see on an almost daily basis that community feeling down there. If you could pick up those kinds of places and those properties and put them down at the Waterfront, I have absolutely no doubt that people would want to live there. That brings me to a very final point that we, as others have said and alluded to, do have a reputational issue with the Waterfront. It is a P.R. (public relations) challenge, to put it most simply. Deputy Miles closed her speech by calling on the Assembly to send a positive message and give hope to Islanders. I would add to that that this is an opportunity to reset the conversation somewhat and start looking at this from a more positive slant. What can we do that really can make a difference to Islanders, rather than always continuing to moan about something we have moaned and argued about for years.

3.1.7 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Like Members who have spoken previously, I want to thank Deputy Miles for bringing this proposition and setting this debate and also for the positive and constructive approach that she adopted after lodging it and the discussions that we had, which were very good discussions. I am going to start by reading something directly from her report, which encapsulates what this is about. She says: "Giving young Islanders and families the hope and knowledge that the Government and the States is committed to delivering no fewer than 500 affordable homes in one new development would make a major contribution towards changing the perspectives of young families as to whether they have a future in Jersey. It would send a message that Jersey is a place where families can prosper, face the future with optimism, and plan for the long-term. It would give confidence that Jersey is an Island where young people can build their lives and establish settled homes and families. It would show that the Government is on their side. She is absolutely right. A big part of this is about hope. The fact that there are many people on our Island who do not have hope, or have not until this point at least, who have looked at the landscape of the housing crisis and been convinced by what they have seen and by what they have seen in successive Government responses to it, that

Jersey may not be a place that they have a future and look forward to a prosperous life, because they simply did not believe that their housing prospects were any good or that they were going to get better. Restoring that hope in young Islanders is absolutely vital if we are to overcome the housing crisis and ensure that Jersey has a prosperous future. I am delighted to support the proposition, because it will contribute to that effort, and to say that while there has been a bumpy journey on this particular issue up until this point with previous propositions that have failed and previous guidance that has been issued by previous Governments that did not speak to the aspirations of Islanders, that we can do a little bit to repair that today by saying that we will not miss the opportunity that the Waterfront provides to develop the right kind of homes and to make a concerted effort to Jersey's young people that we are going to help you to acquire those homes. Start the journey of homeownership and build your futures from that point. That it is our mission to do that and not simply an inconsequential nice to have on the side or something that would be a token gesture by allocating such a small amount of homes to do that. Sending that message to those young Islanders that we are on their side is extremely important. There is lots of work that needs to be done to do that, not just on this site, but on other sites across the Island and in other aspects of the housing policy programme that I am working on. In the manifesto that I stood on, we pledged very clearly that we would require the States of Jersey Development Company to review their proposals for developments on South Hill and the Waterfront to maximise the contribution of affordable homes delivered. We built upon that in the wider text of that document as well. When I was appointed Minister for Housing by this Assembly, on my very first day I established the Housing Crisis Emergency Taskforce to show how seriously we consider the measures that need to be implemented to resolve this crisis. Measures which must focus on the tangible, not the intangible, not more reports, reviews, consultations or the gathering of data, but on the actual things that will help people get into the right kinds of homes for them as soon as possible. I was pleased early on to engage in discussions with the C.E.O. (chief executive officer) of the States of Jersey Development Company to discuss ways that we could think more creatively than we had up until this point to try to maximise the delivery of affordable homes on those sites that have until this point been a bit contentious. I am not in a position yet to provide the absolute detail on this, but when it comes to the South Hill development, at the moment we are on a positive journey to get as much out of that site for young Islanders looking to get into homeownership and to downsizers as well. I look forward, hopefully, in the coming weeks to be able to give some more detail on that. We are able to do much more than we believed we could up until this point. Applying the same approach as Deputy Miles is proposing to the Waterfront is absolutely right too. The questions of viability, of course, come up. They are legitimate questions and have been the subject of debate in recent years. Of course, that has to be considered, but we can do so and deliver the improvements to the Waterfront that we do need to see; improvements in infrastructure and public realm and the homes that Islanders need, if we do so, based on a package of different incentive options for buying homes, not just shared equity. Shared equity is a fine and good way of supporting people into homeownership, but there are other ways as well that are just as good or help meet different kinds of needs that aspiring homeowners may have. However, there are people who aspire to own a home who would not struggle to get a mortgage, but cannot afford to save for a deposit, while there are some who do have a deposit, but cannot quite get the mortgage they need for their home. We need a range of products that aim to support them. The Waterfront and South Hill can be good opportunities to deliver on that. I am pleased with the discussions we have had with the S.o.J.D.C. so far. There will be more consideration that will need to be done on the exact phasing of this. A new waterfront development will not spring up overnight. It will take years to deliver and will likely be done in phases. We will want to consider most appropriately what goes in what phase and how that is managed most effectively. We can do that influenced by the housing need as we observe it at each stage of the way in that. We are in a good position to be able to do that, in assessing the demand on the various other schemes that exist. Deputy Stephenson said something earlier that I did not think was quite right. She referred to the different affordable housing schemes that exist and the criteria of those being aligned. It is the case that there is one set of criteria for getting on the

assisted purchase pathway list, but there are variances in the criteria for different schemes on top of that. The First Step scheme, you can apply for if you are seeking to buy a home with extra bedrooms which you do not already have and have children who will live in those bedrooms. That slightly addresses part of the point she was getting at there. Of course, you can get back on the assisted purchase pathway a little bit easier now than had been the case previously if you have owned a home before and are seeking to upsize. That is valid for certain schemes, but not other schemes. There are differences that arise in some of them. I was very pleased that Deputy Miles very quickly made reference to the right-sizing policy in her proposition and did so in very quick order. The right-sizing policy referred to work with the S.o.J.D.C. to ensure that they are developing homes which can be desirable for those who want to move out of a larger home into a smaller one. I will be clear that that is for those who want to do that. It is not about penalising those who have not made that choice. It is about enabling those who do want to do that. We have already had discussions about the S.o.J.D.C. about what kind of products and incentive mechanisms can be utilised in that to help people who otherwise might not feel it was a viable option for them. There is some really good work on this that is already underway. This proposition provides a good opportunity now for the Assembly to set a clear signal of intent as different to that which existed previously and send out that message that we are taking a new approach on this and we are trying to give hope back to those people who, until this point, you cannot blame for having not felt much of it. I am very pleased to support this proposition, pleased to support the amendment. I thank Deputy Miles for bringing it. After many years of feeling like I have been banging my head on a brick wall on this subject, that bruise on my forehead is getting lighter now, so I thank the Deputy for helping us get to this point.

3.1.8 Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade:

I want to make a speech which is on the theme of stories, although Deputy Mézec has, to some extent, slightly stolen my thunder. It is a 2-year anniversary and for the people who have been in the Assembly for a while that obviously will not count for much, but for me that is halfway through my first term and so I have been taking stock. My son helped me with this recently, and with apologies to people who have heard this before, I will just tell this little story. He told me recently that I was quite well known in his year group at school; he is in year 10. I thought this sounded promising and so I asked him why I was well known, thinking that perhaps it might be to do with something I had done in the Assembly or maybe even my previous career. He did not even look up from what he was doing and he just said: “Big forehead.” That is what I am known for in his year 10. I thought that helped to put things into some perspective. Hopefully, when they come to vote in a couple of years’ time, if I am standing then they may remember me for something else. I have learned a lot in the last 2 years in this Assembly and one of the things I have learned - it is a slight irony really - is that stories matter in politics. It is an irony because my previous job hammered home that stories are the way we communicate as human beings. It is the most powerful form of communication and it is also of course true in politics. But I know that I always have a temptation to default into the detail, to the policy substance, to the technicalities and often it is not about that. It is about the bigger picture, the story. People who get stories right in politics may have a big impact. Obama had a story about America, Nigel Farage has a story about the U.K. (United Kingdom), whatever you may think of it it is a story and it has impact. I think the Waterfront is often approached ... has been approached as a technical issue. For example, we have had to judge it against planning policies. I had to do that last year with a small panel. I had to judge the planning application and of course that was a technical exercise in judging against a very detailed set of policies and a complex judgment.

[11:45]

The decision we made was controversial. I got a lot of feedback backing that decision but of course there were some who were opposed. I would say the one thing absolutely nobody said was: “What a shame we lost such a brilliant scheme.” Nobody said that. I may get some feedback to that effect now but nobody said: “Oh, my word, you have turned down the most amazing scheme.” I think that

is quite telling in terms of the way that the Waterfront has been perceived. That is one way we see the Waterfront, through the lens of planning and we also see it through the lens of the government organisations, the S.o.J.D.C. and commercial factors, the details of whether a scheme is commercially viable, the compromises that have to be made to achieve viability, and that is why we end up with a scheme that is focused on maximising revenue in terms of the housing development in order to fund the public realm or yet tied up in the complexity of, as Deputy Scott said, why 50 per cent and 15 per cent? What are the figures? Why have we chosen those figures? It is all in the detail. I think that is missing the big picture, it is missing the big point, which is that we have had a lack of a compelling story about the Waterfront from politicians and from the J.D.C. I think. I will say that Reform Jersey perhaps deserve some credit; they have attempted to tell a consistent story about that site. This is the story, I think, that most Islanders believe about the Waterfront. I think that people see the Waterfront as a story of shattered dreams and broken promises. It does not feel like it has delivered on what was offered, what was promised. That is not to say that there are not good points about the Waterfront today, as we have heard in the speeches; of course there are. It is perfectly possible to have residents who are happy with their homes and have a wider dissatisfaction with the way the development has developed and indeed from the points of view like the aesthetic point of view because aesthetics do matter. The Waterfront is not a beautiful place. I accept that some people enjoy it, many people enjoy living there. It has good points. It is not a total mess. But it is not an inspirational site when you approach it from most angles. I agree with the current Minister for the Environment very much that aesthetics matter. The fundamental point, I think, is that the Waterfront is ours; it is not private property. It is owned, indeed created, by the people of Jersey through their taxes and, therefore, it is not surprising that people feel invested in the future of the Waterfront. We are all, literally, invested in it. I still get told by people how the idea was originally sold, the idea for reclamation on the Waterfront was originally sold as a wide open space, a public park or something similar. It is against that background that we come to this proposition. I would say that Deputy Miles' proposition does not solve every problem but we are sometimes bedevilled by the picking apart of things, rather than let us build on this. It is not a proposition to solve every problem but that is not a reason to vote against this proposition. The story we need to tell about the Waterfront from now on is that the prime consideration above all others is that it should work for the Island. It has to visibly work for Islanders. Of course you can interpret that in many ways but I interpret it this way. It has to clearly and obviously make a significant contribution to the problems that Islanders are facing. I think this proposition makes that leap. I hope that the S.o.J.D.C. and the Government can use this opportunity to create an inspiring story. I think we have heard good words from the Minister for Housing about his intentions in that regard. It is right for the Government to intervene. It is a Government asset. For Islanders the details of the schemes do not matter that much. Yes, there are problems with assisted purchase. There are always risks; there are risks in everything. But Islanders want us to transmit on a wavelength that says: "We recognise the issues you face, we hear you and we are using one of the levers we have to make a stab at dealing with those issues." The details are for the civil servants and for the J.D.C. and for politicians to deal with. They want us to just show that we understand and we are doing something. I committed in my manifesto to significantly increasing the proportion of affordable homes in government-owned property developments. I will wholeheartedly support this proposition, this amended proposition. Let us start to tell a new story about the Waterfront. I hope the Government and the S.o.J.D.C. rise to that challenge. The proposition opens up a new opportunity, a beginning, not an end. Let us start off on that road.

3.1.9 Deputy M.B. Andrews:

I must start by commending Deputy Miles for doing her job as a Back-Bencher and holding the Executive to account by bringing forward her proposal, and that may have otherwise not been brought forward by the Executive this term. I think it is essential that this States Assembly is supporting people and individuals who have aspirations to enter home ownership. Because, as we all are very much aware, it is very difficult in Jersey accessing home ownership, especially when credit lenders

have robust criteria, 5 times your income, and if you do not match that criteria then, again, it is very unlikely that you will be able to access any borrowing and you will probably just live a life as a perpetual renter. Of course rents in Jersey happen to be very expensive in some cases because the market is so distorted, and that is really prohibiting many households from having the ability to save up for a deposit and then to also match the lending criteria, the criteria that credit lenders have in place. I just would like to go on further about just one concern that I do have, and I think I would just probably want one of the Ministers maybe just to speak on this. It is just about the viability of the development because I know the last time the Waterfront development was proposed there was 15 per cent, 30 per cent and 50 per cent affordable housing on the development. I know with 50 per cent affordable housing and this was, again, in relation to 1,000 units, there was going to be a loss of £44.4 million. Again, it is quite difficult to know what the scale of the development will be. I was just wondering whether consideration has been given as to how much of shared equity loans will be and also as well speaking to the Jersey Development Company, what is our relationship like with credit lenders on the Island? Because I think it is important that if we are agreeing to something we do need to ensure that the project is going to be economically viable. As much as we want to be helping first-time buyers, I think the scale of that assistance has to be recognised. Because what we cannot afford to do is to see no profit, for instance, being made on the development and a credit lender may turn around and say: "I am sorry but we are not willing to lend any monies to the Jersey Development Company." I think that, potentially, could be a risk that that may happen, especially if we are looking at such a scale of support on the development being 50 per cent, whereas, say, if it is maybe 15 per cent, 30 per cent we would probably see that there would be margins in all of the spend, go ahead with the development. I would just like to seek maybe clarity, potentially, from the Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources because I know that the Minister for Treasury and Resources has already spoken about that. That is all I need to say.

3.1.10 Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I was thinking of what else to add to this debate and I just thought I would add maybe something that Deputy Renouf was talking about when he was talking about stories. I just wanted to pull everybody's memories back to the time before when we started talking about what the Waterfront should be. I was quite young then but my mum was on the kind of committee. I do not know what they called it but kind of like a citizens' committee that was pulled together to really think about what we would want from the Waterfront. I think it was in the late 1980s, early 1990s. I remember her coming back from these meetings and over dinner, over the dinner table, being very frustrated about the discussions or animated, I should say, about the discussions about what we could have on the Waterfront. There was this massive space, it was kind of a blank canvas and what we really want for the Island of Jersey. I know that she was extremely frustrated that the report they wrote and the time that they took into that in volunteering, those recommendations were not taken on board and something else was decided instead for the Waterfront. We now have a hotchpotch, or I think somebody mentioned earlier, a dog's dinner of different things though going on there. I think we need to bring it back to what the Island wants, what Jersey wants, and it comes back to that idea of the story that Deputy Renouf was talking about. I am going to be supporting this proposition because it is about when we were during the elections and what we have in the Common Strategic Policy, as well of the Government is we want to be providing affordable housing and affordable homes for Islanders of Jersey. We have that space there, there is a big space that is still to be developed; that blank canvas is not quite filled up yet. It is really important, I think, that we show the Island of Jersey that we are hearing them, they are saying the young people but also those who want to have right-sizing, that we say, yes, we are hearing you and we can do this by helping provide on public land those kind of homes and that kind of community space that you were asking for. We can go back a little bit to that time when there was a complete blank canvas when we asked those Islanders right at the beginning what we really wanted and what they wanted in this piece of land.

The Bailiff:

Thank you very much, Deputy. Does any other Member wish to speak on the proposition? If no other Member wishes to speak, then I close the debate and call upon Deputy Miles to respond.

3.1.11 Deputy H.M. Miles:

Thank you to all the Members that have spoken in this debate. I do not want this summing-up speech to go on for too long, it is very hot in here. I will just pull out a few comments. First of all, from Deputy Warr, who is clearly interested and passionate about this subject. One of the questions he asked me was about why the 50 per cent figure. A very good question. The aim has to be to build as much housing as possible which can be accessed by first-time buyers with or without an assisted purchase product. The previous propositions have all ranged 15 per cent, 30 per cent, 50 per cent. I did point out in my report that 50 per cent would be a challenge and did invite amendments from Members if they felt differently. I completely accept it is not an exact science but I am heartened that the Minister for Housing has agreed to deliver on the 50 per cent set out, which is very positive, also with that flexible combination of products in between. He made some really valid comments, lots of comments made about the Waterfront by people who do not live at the Waterfront, which was why I reached out to residents, I engaged with residents and I have listened to what they have said. As I said in my opening speech, I have changed some of the language that I have used around the Waterfront accordingly. I have also suggested that a couple of those residents should set themselves up as the poster boys and girls for the States of Jersey Development Company for future developments because they are very clearly enthusiastic and passionate about what can be achieved there. Deputy Warr also mentioned the economic impact assessment, which has helpfully been provided in the assessment, and which I have read carefully. A lot of that economic impact assessment says things that might happen and we have had a lot happen over the last 5 years that we were not expecting; COVID, Brexit, examples. The economic impact statement is a view on what might happen. It also talks about developers seeking to maximise their own profits, and I think we have to take that into consideration, particularly when we look at the £44.4 million that was raised in the final speech by Deputy Andrews.

[12:00]

Deputy Warr also talked about vacant homes and, yes, of course if we had a magic wand and we could fill all the vacant homes across the Island we would have a far-reduced necessity to be building homes at all but that is not the subject of this proposition. I am glad that Deputy Tadier used the word exciting because I think that it is exciting. I think we have some hope here, certainly from the speeches that I am picking up across the Assembly, that people are genuinely enthusiastic and genuinely can do about what has historically proved to be quite a tricky issue. I particularly liked his area about the rent-to-buy scheme and I hope that the Minister for Housing and the Minister for Treasury and Resources will consider that as part of the overall assisted purchase scheme. Deputy Scott talked about the residents of St. Brelade and empirical data. I do not have empirical data; I have not gone around with my clipboard. But I did knock on nearly every door in the Parish and a lot of people in housing estates; people my age, empty-nesters, widowers, widows, said: "Yes, we would love to stay in St. Brelade and we would like an alternative." We have had 2 alternative sites in St. Brelade over the last few years, one at either end of Route Orange and both of those sites, which would have been very suitable for downsize housing. Little villages like Table Park have, unfortunately, according to the planning processes, gone through for large luxury developments but, again, that is not the subject of this proposition. I was really pleased to hear Deputy Curtis talk technically about some of the issues on the Waterfront and some of the issues across the Island. The issue of density is a really, really interesting one because lots of people say: "I do not want to go and live in a rabbit hutch." The look and feel of what is down there already is very high density. There is also the issue of some of the density, I know the minimum standards but some of the density standards across St. Helier. What I really want is for this debate to empower the Minister for Treasury

and Resources and the Minister for Housing to be able to challenge some of the policies that are in place, which impede the developments of appropriate and suitable housing, particularly around the south-west of St. Helier framework. We have got an opportunity to create sustainable communities, something that was picked up by Deputy Stephenson. I was happy that the Minister for Housing was able to clarify about this very strange policy of only being able to buy housing according to the existing size of your family or not a family at all, when you know you might want to move forward and have a family. There does need to be flexibility of criteria and I think the Minister for Housing has addressed that. In Jersey the property ladder is very short. You might want to call it a stepladder or even a step. When my parents bought our home on a States loan there was no suggestion that they might be moving somewhere else in 5 or 10 years. It was the home that they would raise their family in, and I think the same can be said for a lot of the States-loan purchases. I think we do need to get away from this criteria of I will have a one-bedroom flat and then a 3-bedroom house. Moving in Jersey is fiendishly expensive. The issue of the public realm, again, I know it is an area of concern for the Minister for Treasury and Resources. I was very pleased that Deputy Stephenson mentioned Fort Regent. It is a bit of a white elephant, is it not? We have got significant opportunities there for public realm and what is the expectation there? How are the Waterfront public realm areas and Fort Regent public realm areas going to complement each other? How do we understand that in the round? I agree wholeheartedly with the Minister for Housing. Our children do need hope and they need confidence that they have a future. I am really pleased to hear that the Minister for Housing can deliver, based on a package of measures and that he is envisaging a range of products that will help young people to get on to the policy ladder. Again, Deputy Renouf, always lyrical speeches. There is a really long story about the Waterfront and there is something published that was written, I think, in 2017 about the history of that by a local architect. There has been a lack of a compelling story but we have an opportunity to piece back together those shattered dreams and broken promises, as the Deputy refers to. I agree that obviously this proposition does not solve every problem but it is an important step and it has to work for Islanders, it has to work for Jersey. We are not Cape Town, we are not Dubai, we are not Paris, we are not Canary Wharf. We are a small island and we need to find an Island solution for an Island problem that affects Islanders. I think that the site represents our opportunity to send that message. A great deal of time and money has already been spent on an unpopular Waterfront scheme that many people, including numerous experts, have predicted would not achieve positive outcomes for Islanders or even achieve planning permission. If we are to change the outcome, next time I believe we have got to change the brief to which the S.o.J.D.C. are working. All of what we have heard today needs to be on the table. We need a community-led development and an agreement that there is an intent to deliver a scheme that delivers different housing, less height, less density, fewer rabbit hutches, more suitable right-sizing products; one that I would want to buy. This Government seems to have the appetite to grip the Waterfront development once and for all, grip it firmly and provide clear direction to the States of Jersey Development Company. This proposition is an opportunity for all States Members to show our support for that shared ambition. I ask for the appel, Sir.

The Bailiff:

The appel is called for. I invite Members to return to their seats. I ask the Greffier to open the voting and Members to vote. If Members have had the opportunity of casting their vote, I ask the Greffier to close the voting. The proposition has been adopted: 44 votes pour, no votes contre, no abstentions.

[Approval]

POUR: 44		CONTRE: 0		ABSTAIN: 0
Connétable of St. Lawrence				
Connétable of St. Brelade				
Connétable of Trinity				

Connétable of St. Martin				
Connétable of St. John				
Connétable of Grouville				
Connétable of St. Ouen				
Connétable of St. Mary				
Connétable of St. Saviour				
Deputy G.P. Southern				
Deputy C.F. Labey				
Deputy M. Tadier				
Deputy S.G. Luce				
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet				
Deputy K.F. Morel				
Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat				
Deputy S.M. Ahier				
Deputy R.J. Ward				
Deputy C.S. Alves				
Deputy I. Gardiner (H)				
Deputy I.J. Gorst				
Deputy L.J. Farnham				
Deputy K.L. Moore				
Deputy S.Y. Mézec				
Deputy T.A. Coles				
Deputy B.B. de S.V.M. Porée				
Deputy D.J. Warr				
Deputy H.M. Miles				
Deputy M.R. Scott				
Deputy J. Renouf				
Deputy C.D. Curtis				
Deputy L.V. Feltham				
Deputy R.E. Binet				
Deputy H.L. Jeune				
Deputy M.E. Millar				
Deputy A. Howell				
Deputy T.J.A. Binet				

Deputy M.R. Ferey				
Deputy R.S. Kovacs				
Deputy A.F. Curtis				
Deputy B. Ward				
Deputy K.M. Wilson				
Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson				
Deputy M.B. Andrews				

Deputy Andrews, do you ...

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Yes, Sir. I would just like to announce that I am withdrawing my Strategic Reserve proposition, Sir.

The Bailiff:

Very well. The Deputy has announced he is withdrawing the next proposition, which he is entitled to do and that concluded the business of the Assembly.

ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Bailiff:

I would invite the chair of P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) to propose the arrangements for future business.

4. Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin (Chair, Privileges and Procedures Committee):

There have been no additional lodgings since the Consolidated Order Paper was published and there are a number of items down for debate at the 16th July meeting. I would expect that meeting will last for at least the Tuesday and the Wednesday. Members should note that in light of the public holiday, which we agreed yesterday, the deadline for oral questions for the next meeting has been brought forward to Wednesday, 10th July. The States Greffe will send out a calendar reminder for the deadline for oral questions. I make the proposition for the arrangement of business.

The Bailiff:

Do any Members have any comment or observations? We will take that as accepted. Very well. Thank you very much, Chair, that is the arrangement for future business. Accordingly, that concludes the business of the Assembly and the Assembly stands adjourned until 15th July for the King's visit.

ADJOURNMENT

[12:09]