

4.19 Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement of the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development regarding attempts at stabilising the construction and retail sectors (OQ.217/2025):

Will the Minister advise what targeted support, if any, is available to stabilise the construction and retail sectors and what plans, if any, he has for improving business confidence in these areas?

Deputy K.F. Morel of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity (The Minister for Sustainable Economic Development):

I think the short answer is there is no money that is purely allocated to the construction and retail sectors. The Better Business Support Package, though, includes £5.3 million in productivity and skills grants for this year and next year, which are all available to construction and retail sectors and are obviously available by Jersey Business. At the end of June there were 58 approved grants, of these 40 per cent have been awarded to employers in the construction centre and 4 per cent to retail businesses. 2025 grant funding is still available and so I would encourage all employers in all sectors, including those in construction and retail, to make the most of the opportunity to invest in their people and processes, supported by funding from Government and, of course, that Government support is available up to £75,000 per project on a match-funded basis.

4.19.1 Deputy K.M. Wilson:

The Minister will be aware that the economic regulator has concluded their year-long investigation into the construction industry and that was prompted by concerns about the number of construction firms that have folded. Can he explain how his department is working with the Construction Council and the regulator to ensure that there are fair competition, market stability and long-term resilience in the market?

Deputy K.F. Morel:

We will continue as a department to engage both with the regulator and with the industry and, as the Deputy suggested, our principal means of engaging with the construction sector is by the Construction Council but we will also work with fellow Ministers and their departments. I know the Minister for Infrastructure is engaging with the Construction Council around the I.C.E. (Island Construction and Engineering) programme, which is about showing that list and that pipeline of work that is available to the construction sector because aside from financial support, that pipeline of work from Government is extremely important in helping the construction sector maintain its stability.