

PERSONAL STATEMENTS

The Bailiff:

We come now to J - Personal Statements - and I have notice that Deputy Pitman wishes to make a personal statement.

5. Deputy S. Pitman of St. Helier:

[Aside] While advising the Assembly that I will be making a more in-depth statement to the media, with your permission, Sir, I nevertheless feel it is also necessary to make a brief response to the allegations of the conflict of interest brought against me in relation to the Jersey Youth Service during the last States sitting. I am pleased to be able to confirm to Members that you have confirmed to me, Sir, that I am not prevented from asking questions on this matter in the context of the Standing Orders that are currently in force. Firstly, from any direct or otherwise pecuniary implications on which any complaint to the Privileges and Procedures Committee regarding a conflict of interest would hinge, I would reiterate the fact that I have in fact raised genuine concerns relating to the following: the assurance of best value for Jersey tax payers in the delivery and efficiency of a States service by enabling professional youth workers, as our employees, to provide informal education. Perhaps of even more importance is the protection of the interests and general health and safety of our Island's young people making use of this excellent but much undervalued service. The Jersey Youth Service, which I would like to point out I worked for, for 4 years, so I am very much aware of the issues it faces. It is a community service providing much needed opportunities for thousands of young people with its main responsibility lying with this Government. I am, Sir, a part of this Government. Finally, Sir, I would add only that I was elected by people who put their trust in me to represent them. With that responsibility comes a fundamental commitment to seek the truth. I may be a young woman and I may be a newcomer to this House, Sir, but in terms of this obligation, this blonde is not for turning. Thank you, Sir.

5.1 Senator M.E. Vibert:

Can I ask whether that was a personal statement?

The Bailiff:

It was a personal statement.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

And can I ask, I did not have any indication that it was going to be made at all from any of the papers in front of me at my desk and I would have liked to have been in for it. I was just trying to do a little bit of work that needed to be dealt with and I would have liked to have heard the start of the statement. I apologise that I was not in the House for the start.

The Bailiff:

No apology from you is called for, Minister, at all. It was a personal statement which came in late and was not, therefore, able to get on to the supplementary Order Paper.