

STATES OF JERSEY

YOUTH ASSEMBLY OFFICIAL REPORT

TUESDAY, 5th APRIL 2022

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[13:33]

The Roll was called and Ms. Claudia Blackstone led the Assembly in Prayer.

COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The Bailiff:

1.1 Welcome

I am very pleased indeed to welcome you all as members of the Youth Assembly today. It is an enormous pleasure to be part of this Assembly and I am sure you will have an absolutely super afternoon. I would love to have stayed for the entirety of the meeting this afternoon but unfortunately I am right in the middle of judging a case in the Royal Court and I have to be there in about half an hour's time so I can only stay perhaps for the first question or 2 today. However, Deputy Kirsten Morel of St. Lawrence, sitting over there, is primed and ready. He is the Deputy Chair of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which sponsors this event, and he will take over from me as Chair for the rest of the session so you will be in very good and safe hands indeed. I am also sorry that I am not going to be here because judging by the questions and topics listed for debate on the Order Paper it promises to be a very interesting afternoon indeed. I hope that you enjoy the experience of being here and that it inspires you to take an active part in Jersey's politics and its democracy. Perhaps you might even consider pursuing a career in politics. A fair number of people over in that corner already have pursued a career in politics but you might think of that as well. And you will consider it important to vote, particularly in the elections in June. You are going to have, I hope, a great afternoon. I am sure you will in fact. I am sure that Ministers are enormously eager to respond to the questions that have been listed so we will make a start.

QUESTIONS

2. Oral Questions

The Bailiff:

We come to the first item on the Order Paper, which is question time and I call upon Charles Maloney who will ask a question of the Deputy of Trinity, Assistant Minister ... he is not here. We will move on to the next question then and come back to that in due course.

2.1 Ms. B. Pesco of the Minister for Children and Education regarding the Island identity

How is the Minister planning to implement the recommendations of the recent Island identity report?

Deputy S.M. Wickenden of St. Helier (The Minister for Children and Education):

Thank you for the question. The Island Identity Board identified 6 key areas of life in Jersey that shapes and influences the unique attributes that create Jersey's identity. Original recommendations have been edited into opportunities and ideas which are guided by objectives. These offer a lens through which to review policy decisions rather than fixed recommendations or concrete steps. It is in the spirit that implementation of this report is being carried forward into schools with some partnership projects. As the questioner said, the projects are currently in different phases of development and there are 6 steps within what they are marked. I am happy to answer questions on the steps in supplemental questions.

2.1.1 Ms. B. Pesco:

You have spoken about opportunities and ideas. Can I have an example of an opportunity or idea that you have put in place?

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

The Curriculum Council is working alongside government departments and third sector and charity areas to identify where we can build a resource online that shows about Island identity. It helps

teachers with the curriculum and how they can teach with resources within the classrooms. So we are going out to ArtHouse Jersey, we are doing things like Jèrriais in schools and looking at our French links through the French project in year 5. What we are trying to do is talk to all of the organisations like Heritage, Jèrriais, and the likes to build resources in schools to help start implementing in the curriculum the Island identity and getting views from children.

The Bailiff:

Does anyone else have any questions for the Minister on this matter? If you have any questions you press your light, as I am sure you know. I would not want the Minister to get away with it too lightly.

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

I just answered well, Sir.

The Bailiff:

It must be the answer, Deputy, indeed. In which case that brings that question to an end. We come on to the next question which Tilly Beckwolden of Jersey College for Colleges will ask of Deputy Trevor Pointon, who is or is not here. We do not need to do that, we can go back to the original question, which the Deputy of Trinity undoubtedly will be ready to answer immediately.

2.2 Mr. C. Maloney of the Assistant Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture regarding the future of the hospitality industry

Given the effects on the hospitality industry from the pandemic does the Minister support initiatives to encourage people back into Island events?

Deputy H. Raymond of Trinity (Assistant Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture):

Good afternoon, apologies for being late. I certainly do. I think the essential thing about the hospitality in Jersey is that we are very good at it and we were very good at it, and unfortunately they have suffered over this period of time. Most definitely the closure of restaurants, public houses, hotels and the entertainment venues during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of this sector to Islanders and to the economy, not just visitors to the Island. Government acted quickly to safeguard Islanders' jobs and livelihoods by rapidly putting in place financial support in the form of the co-funded payroll scheme, which you probably all know about. As the pandemic continued, additional financial support schemes were put in place specifically to support the hospitality industry to ensure the businesses could survive through the challenging period. These included government-backed loan guarantees, the visitor accommodation support scheme and the visitor attraction and event scheme. In total the Island spent £233 million supporting the economy through the pandemic. Tourism makes a significant contribution to Jersey's economy and plays a vital role to our quality of life as well as building our reputation around the world. As we emerge from the pandemic it is therefore imperative that we collaborate and work together to ensure our beautiful Island remains a cheerleader in tourism, and I think we certainly have to go to get that back. There is no question about it that we have lost a few restaurants. As you know we have lost a few hotels but hopefully, looking forward, we are going to get a few more hotels which I would support without any doubt at all. If there are any real questions that anybody would like to ask please do not hesitate to do so.

2.2.1 Mr. C. Maloney:

Does the Minister consider that happy hours and promotional drinking campaigns are appropriate and should the Government be looking instead to address the Island's current drinking culture?

The Deputy of Trinity:

I think it is, and I think as you know there are situations going through the present Government at the moment as to the views they are giving on such a thing. I am not so sure does that bring people in?

I think they have been looking at the drinking regulations for some time and I am not sure that it brings people in. What we are trying to do is to get people back into the hospitality industry. I think one of the major problems that we are facing is not so much about whether we do 2 for one or come up with situations like that, it is whether we have the people to run the restaurants and bars to be able to do it, and that is a major issue. It is about people now and we have to make sure that we have got the people here to be able to provide the facilities that people want.

2.2.2 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Recently, with no help from the pandemic, many of our iconic hotels are shutting down. What is the Minister doing to regulate and increase the tourism on the Island?

The Deputy of Trinity:

That is a very good question and I could go on for quite some time. I am smiling to my Assistant Minister across the road there on the other side of the Assembly.

[13:45]

At the present time, Fort Regent comes under my realm and, dare I say it, St. Peter's as well. In those places at the present time there are suggestions that they are the places that hotels should be built. We have lost a number of rooms and again, I still come back down to one of the major issues about this, is the fact it is okay having the hotels and it is okay building them but we have to make sure we still have the people to run them. I think that is becoming the most essential thing that I am finding in this particular aspect at the moment.

2.3 Ms. T. Beckwolden of the Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the protection of vulnerable Islanders

What is Jersey doing to protect its most vulnerable Islanders following the pandemic?

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John (Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services):

Thank you for the question. I have to firstly say that it is appropriate within questions here at the Youth Assembly, my role involves being the Assistant Minister to the Minister for Health and Social Services but also the Assistant Minister for Children and Education with a responsibility for Children and Adolescent Mental health Services. The question is very appropriate both in relation to young people and children but also in relation to the wider adult population. It is recognised that the pandemic has increased the need for both those who were already vulnerable and across the general population. The Government has taken significant steps to support the most vulnerable following the pandemic. This includes support for those with low income or for those families most affected economically by the pandemic, by ensuring families could continue to receive an income via the government-funded payroll scheme and increasing the income support rate. Investing in health and social care by creating a new front door to services via the Children and Families Hub now the public and professionals can ring the hub for advice, guidance and support to access services such as the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service. There has been significant investment in community health and mental health services, approximately £6 million annually of which £2.6 million is new money. This is driven by the children and young people's emotion and well-being mental health strategy of 2022 to 2025. This includes an expansion of the Listening Lounge and counselling services, a new Saturday well-being drop in and commissioning services such as Kooth for online counselling and support for those aged between 10 and 25. It is recognised that investing in the early years is crucial to help babies bond with their carers and to develop appropriately, so a COVID recovery bid of £330,000 was agreed to support those areas of identified need post-pandemic, including language and communication development. Learning delays, social and emotional needs and family information and guidance are all being provided anew. Within education a school catch-up programme has been created recognising some children and young people may have fallen behind and missed learning. Laptops have also been provided for home learning. Free period products will

be available in all schools from September 2022. In addition, a free school meal pilot for those in receipt of income support is being expanded and is expected that this will be in all primary schools by 2024. Thank you for the question.

2.3.1 Ms. T. Beckwolden:

Are there any plans on cutting down on waiting lists for C.A.M.H.S. (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)?

The Deputy of St. John:

In actual fact, waiting lists have been reduced quite considerably but it is a double-edged sword. Unfortunately during the pandemic period the increase in referrals has been a difficult problem to deal with. But, yes, additional staff have been brought into C.A.M.H.S., be they agency staff or permanent staff, additional structures and separation of different specialities within C.A.M.H.S. has enabled those waiting lists, especially for autism and A.D.H.D. (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), to be reduced. Yes, quite genuinely there is a desire within the service to ensure that the demand does not outstrip the resource and the resource is being built all the time.

2.3.2 Ms. R. Filleul:

What is the Minister doing to ensure there is 24/7 help available for Islanders struggling with their mental health rather than just during the office hours of services like C.A.M.H.S.?

The Deputy of St. John:

Another very good question. It is recognised that there is a reputation that C.A.M.H.S. is only a 9 to 5 service. That is not now the case. C.A.M.H.S. and Adult Mental Health Services are collaborating to utilise the crisis intervention service that exists to help deal with those issues that arise in adolescents especially and children of a mental health nature. We are busy trying to expand the place of safety areas that adolescents and children can get to. In addition, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service are in fact collaborating with the Y.E.S. (Youth Enquiry Service) service and have a drop-in centre on a Saturday. Over 220 people have attended that centre since it was opened in October last year. The foundation is the Y.E.S. building itself or the Y.E.S. offices and C.A.M.H.S. nurses, C.A.M.H.S. practitioners, are there to speak to on a drop-in basis, which is very different to the way things have been in the past.

2.3.3 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

After the recent death of a young person on the Island it is clear that mental health services such as C.A.M.H.S. are clearly stretched regardless of additional staff and money. What additional measures is the Minister going to put in place to ensure that young people are getting the support they need on the Island?

The Deputy of St. John:

Again, a good question.

The Bailiff:

I am afraid we are not hearing you at the moment, Deputy.

The Deputy of St. John:

I had an echo, Sir.

The Bailiff:

I think we are all right now. Carry on.

The Deputy of St. John:

The whole focus of our mental health well-being and strategy for 2022, which is a 4-year plan that will enable the service to better address not just as a C.A.M.H.S. unit but through the counselling support unit in schools through the Y.E.S. programme, through the Kooth online service, Mind and even the other talking therapies are available to people who are feeling distressed. Very often it is a matter of people feeling comfortable to approach and feeling that they are able to off-burden their anxieties. We would encourage people to do that and the services are being set up to support people to off burden. But everyone plays a role, from parents to teachers to practitioners in the field, and also individuals to find the skill and the substance, the brave approach to seeking assistance from those people that have the skills to support.

2.3.4 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Why is the Minister focusing on a 4-year plan when it is clear that mental health needs to be bettered now?

The Deputy of St. John:

I appreciate that the need is here now. We are very much conscious of that and the whole process will be a relatively gradual process. There is no magic wand. We need to make sure that people in society, not only those who are in distress but also those working with people in distress, recognise that there needs to be support both here and now and improved support for the future. I make no excuse of the fact that the service sometimes in the past has fallen short but we are attempting to address the needs of young people and children. I think we are being successful.

2.3.5 Ms. L. Chambers:

In reference to the original question of what Jersey will be doing to protect the most vulnerable Islanders, over the last 2 years we have been constantly bombarded by messages of how dangerous the COVID-19 pandemic is and I was just wondering how the Government will be protecting the most physically vulnerable Islanders?

The Deputy of St. John:

We have been working from the top down, as you are well aware, to offer the most vulnerable first vaccination and to roll that vaccination out through our society. It is a fact that I am in what is called a vulnerable group and so I have had all 3 vaccinations and my wife is going to have a fourth vaccination. We also take precautions and I think the message needs to go out that although we are being vaccinated the virus is still out there in our society and people who have vulnerabilities, if they become sick, are at risk of developing quite serious illness.

The Bailiff:

We will move on to the next question but before I do so I will invite Deputy Morel to take over. Thank you all very much indeed. As I say, I would love to be able to come back but I will be occupied for the rest of the afternoon, so sorry about that.

Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence (in the Chair):

Thank you and good afternoon. I think we are moving straight on to Charles Maloney with his question.

2.4 Mr. C. Maloney of the Assistant Minister for Social Security regarding protecting Islanders against poverty

What concrete proposals do you have to protect Islanders against poverty?

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (Assistant Minister for Social Security):

Thank you, Deputy, and *merci pour la question*. The Minister for Social Security is responsible for the Island's social security net. This is made up of a range of benefits that are paid to people and in order to support workers' rights. Benefits are mostly paid to households who cannot fully support themselves through work. This could be because someone is unemployed or cannot work due to illness, disability or because they are caring for somebody or because they have reached retirement age. We also paid benefits to households who have low income or additional needs. Even if someone is working the Minister sets the level of the minimum wage and was responsible for the emergencies scheme that supported people who could not work during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this term of office the minimum wage has gone from £7.50 per hour to £9.22 per hour. This has been one of the largest increases during the term of office since the minimum wage was introduced in Jersey in 2005. There are 3 recent examples of where we have needed to propose something new from social security to protect Islanders against poverty. The first was during the pandemic when we needed to support people who did not qualify for income support but who could not work or leave the Island to find work elsewhere.

[14:00]

We quickly designed a temporary scheme to pay money to these households to support them with the cost of food and other essentials. Jersey did a good job and I am proud to have played my part in supporting people through the worst of the pandemic. The second was we launched the health access scheme in December 2020, which helps low-income households with the cost of seeing their doctor. This means that children up to the age of 16 on this scheme can see a doctor for free. The third example is more recent. The Minister has just announced extra payments to people who receive income support and low-income pensioners. The Minister plans to give recipients an extra £20 per month per person to help towards extra costs that they face because of the global rise in prices. These are households most at risk of poverty in Jersey and this extra money will help meet sudden and unexpected rise in costs of fuel and food caused by inflation, including the situation in the Ukraine. A pensioner couple will receive £40 a month extra, a couple with 2 children will receive an extra £80 per month. The Minister is also working alongside other Ministers to consider what other measures could be introduced in order to assist Islanders who face financial difficulties.

2.4.1 Mr. C. Maloney:

You speak of introducing other measures. What do these entail and what is the timescale for when these will be introduced?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

These discussions are involving other Ministers, including the Minister for Treasury and Resources. At the moment we are still brainstorming and working with officers about what this can be; the detail we do not have at the moment. Regarding the timescales of course, we are about to embark on an election so preparatory work is going to happen so that there are plans and options in place for the new Council of Ministers in the Assembly in September.

2.4.2 Mr. O. Elvidge:

When you are increasing a minimum wage how are industries going to pay for that if they cannot afford to stand when the minimum wage is at its normal rate?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

The process regarding the minimum wage in Jersey is set down within the law, and that means it goes to the Employment Forum to consult. The Employment Forum is made up of bodies, which represent employers and employees. Between them they work with various sectors and industries in order to determine what would be an acceptable rate for businesses to pay. They come to a negotiation and

they make that recommendation to the Minister. I think in all cases the Minister has either accepted or gone higher with that recommendation. We have just changed the system - so it used to happen twice a year in April and October - and I think we have just changed it for the purposes to harmonise with the changes in the tax law so it should now occur going forward on 1st January.

2.5 Ms. I. Hickman of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding reducing the use of cars

What is being done to encourage Islanders to reduce the use of their cars?

Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour (The Minister for Infrastructure):

The S.T.P. (Sustainable Transport Policy) is how Government plans to reduce our reliance on motor vehicles, by encouraging Islanders to adopt more sustainable modes of transport. In the first interim report on the S.T.P. published at the end of last year, I acknowledged the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on the implementation of the S.T.P. I am now pleased to say that work is back on track, delivering both tangible improvements on the ground and gaining better insight through focused research to inform further development of policies that support the S.T.P. The work that was promised in the S.T.P. framework will be brought together in a strategic plan for the Island's transport system to be published later this year. It will be based on evidence and outputs from the work of the rapid plans around active travel, the bus development plan, parking and mobility as a service as well as engaging with key stakeholders and feedback from Islanders. This strategic plan will set out the long-term challenges to the Island's transport systems, including identifying potential funding streams to support investment in sustainable transport and to achieve the States Assembly's aspiration that by 2030 our transport system will make our everyday lives better, support businesses, encourage us all to be healthier and make our Island greener.

2.5.1 Ms. I. Hickman:

Following on from the previous questions as well about poverty, hybrid and electrical vehicles are much more expensive, so why has a subsidy not been put in place and why do petrol and diesel cars not have an increase in tax?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

This is something that the various departments are looking at at the moment, but we have to be fair to all. Because people cannot afford to buy electric vehicles at the moment we cannot tax fuels - petrol and diesel - too much, but we are supporting greener fuels like the green diesel fuel that is on the market at the moment, and also E7 and E12, which is a greener form of petrol, so it is a several pronged attack on the problem.

2.5.2 Mr. S. Hugo:

I was just wondering what supplementary transport does Deputy Lewis have in mind.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

We are trying to encourage as much cycling as we can. We have got quite a bit going on at the moment with the various cycle routes. You might have noticed directly outside of the States Assembly here to the right we have the Hill Street pop-up cycle lane, which encourages people to cycle and takes the cycles straight through to La Motte Street, which is against traffic, but it is a separate lane entirely. I am very keen on safer routes to school. We have done one recently in Bagatelle Lane with the Parish of St. Saviour. Also the Parish of St. Saviour has made the Bel Air Lane a safety refuge with a virtual footpath on the side and making that one way makes that awfully safe to cycle to school. We have got a long way to go with the safer routes to school scheme. It is a self-fulfilling prophecy that lots of people do not feel safe cycling to school, so they are either on the school bus or parents may take them in the car, which does exacerbate the problem for everybody else. If you will pardon the pun, we need to break the cycle and just make safer routes to school so people can make their own way to school without having to get a lift from parents. The buses are

very good. Lots of people use a variety, a mix of both the conventional service and the school bus service, changing from one to the other, but as I say, we have got lots of work to do and we really appreciate your feedback.

2.5.3 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Has the Minister thought about subsidising bike prices to both reduce our carbon footprint and give lower-income households more freedom to travel on the Island? What other plans does the Minister have to allow for people to commute at lower prices without relying on their cars?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

As I say, we have done a lot recently. We have had 2 tranches of vouchers for people to buy electric bikes, which have been very, very popular - both schemes were over-subscribed - to encourage as many people as possible to use the cycling routes. Electric cycles can be very expensive, but second-hand cycles are available. They are quite reasonably priced. You can get them from the charity shops in Trinity and elsewhere for about £30 or £40. We have done a lot of work making crossings safer. We have done Pont Marquet, which now has a toucan crossing, which is, believe it or not, one up from a pelican crossing because literally 2 can cross there, both cyclists and pedestrians, and also that feeds into the safer routes to school. We have just had the Dutch Cycling Academy over, of which I am a member. I have been cycling over parts of Delft and Utrecht in the Netherlands and getting a lot of experience there. It would be great to get them back again. We have just had a meeting with them in Jersey. I would like to get them back over and do a schools and colleges meeting where you can ask them directly about their experiences. You can imagine my delight not so long ago cycling into an underground garage in Utrecht, the Netherlands, to find there is bicycle parking for 25,000 bikes, which is completely unheard of, and that you have to take a photograph of the number where your bike is so you do not lose it. But as I say, they are completely geared up for it, but we are running from a standing stop. One of the problems is because we do have quite a dense population in the south of the Island, everything we do on the south side of the Island is a retrofit and that to put in a bike lane I have to take away sometimes some car-parking, which can cause a few problems. We are heading in the right direction, but we would like to encourage more and more people to walk and cycle. As well as the Minister for Infrastructure, I am also a Deputy for St. Saviour, so I did in fact walk here today and I will be walking home later, so safer routes to school, walking and cycling is the way ahead.

2.5.4 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Does the Minister think that long-term roadworks are necessary, such as implementing speed bumps at Havre des Pas, while there is an ongoing climate change crisis? Is there a way to maintain good standards of roads without adding to the pollution due to traffic?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

The Havre des Pas roadworks, that was a proposition by the Parish of St. Helier. I did in fact reduce the speed bumps from 7 speed bumps down to 3 because, as I say, it is a 20-mile-an-hour limit there and people do tend to speed, so we need to keep everybody safe. We are spending money where we think we need to. A quick mention of the bus service, which I think is excellent. We have installed the first bus lane in Jersey, which as you exit from the bus station, the bus can now turn right and run in front of the Pomme d'Or Hotel, and that saves 10 minutes during rush hour for buses going out east. We have got another scheme coming up in the not-too-distant future which will take a bus going left, going west of the Island, and will travel along the Esplanade and by augmenting the traffic lights and putting in a lane there, the bus will be able to cut straight across there to go west, again cutting off between 8 and 12 minutes from the travel time when travelling west in the Island. It is these little things we are putting together. We are putting in more bus shelters to make it more pleasant for people to use the bus service. It is so good now if you live in St. Clement, for instance,

or on the southern route. You do not need a bus timetable, you just wait at the bus stop and within 10 minutes a bus will come along. Also those of you with iPhones, there is an app called Bus Tracker, which literally physically tracks every single bus on the Island and shows you physically where it is. It is these little things that we are trying to encourage to use public transport as much as possible.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you. If I could remind Ministers to try to keep their answers to 90 seconds, please.

2.5.5 Mr. R. Arnell:

Given the recent I.P.C.C. (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report on climate change, is the S.T.P. being given enough or sufficient priority?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

It is being given sufficient priority. It can always do with more money. We are working with our colleagues at Environment because they are heading up the climate change division. We could always do with more money. There are lots of things that we need to do, but as I say, everything we do is a retrofit, but we are very keen to pursue this as fast as we can.

2.5.6 Ms. R. Filleul:

Does the Minister have plans to increase electric charging points in the Island to make it easier for Islanders to use electric cars?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Yes, indeed. All of our multi-storey car parks now have charging points in. We have a minimum of 2 charging points in all of our multi-storey car parks and I believe Pier Road has 10 charging points, which are available to the public. A lot of people use private ones. If you are lucky enough to have a garage or a driveway at home, you can charge your car at home via a 13-amp socket, but as lots of people live in apartments, that is not so easy. We are communicating with the Jersey Electricity Company with regards to putting in on-street charging points. They are quite slow, but with the fast charging points the extra cable is in, so that is a cost we have to look at.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Just to let everyone know, I have Ms. Walker, Mr. Maloney and Mr. Vieira to ask questions on this very popular subject, but we will draw a line there.

2.5.7 Ms. B. Walker:

What are the Minister's plans to introduce more cycle paths in Jersey, especially on busy roads such as St. Saviour's Hill?

[14:15]

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

St. Saviour's Hill is a tricky one; St. Saviour's Hill is very difficult. I would like to put a cycle path in, also Les Varines is very, very tricky as well, that coming up from Longueville is very tricky because there is a local farmer who is allowing people to walk through his field, but it comes to a point where you meet a house, which is on a bend, so everything is in the mix at the moment. That is something that I would dearly love to ... it is a problem I would dearly move to solve. St. Saviour's Hill is another awkward one. We are trying to work with the schools and colleges at the moment. For people who have mopeds, some are lucky enough to have cars, there should be sort of a postcode parking, so if you have come from the west of the Island, you should park on the old D'Hautree site; if you come from the east, then you park in the Highlands compound. There is lots of things we can do to make sure that people park in the nearest exit, if you like, to where they are going to avoid the whole circular thing. As I mentioned previously, lots of parents ... if you use the school bus it can

take up to an hour to get school or college, which is a nuisance. It is a long time. Lots of parents come into town to work so they combine the 2, that they drop their children off at school on the way. It is also family time, we appreciate that, but we have this whole circular thing coming up: Mont Millais, we have J.C.G. (Jersey College for Girls), we have Victoria College. Going further around, obviously we have De La Salle, we have Hautlieu and all the schools coming down there. It is just a whole circular thing going on. I always say, as a St. Saviour Deputy, we have the most schools in the Island in our Parish, but it is something we are desperately trying to get a grip on, but obviously greater use of public transport and greater use of walking and cycling is to be encouraged and we will do everything we can to make that happen.

2.5.7 Mr. C. Maloney:

As a result of the initiatives to encourage cycling, do you have any concrete numbers to show an uptake in the amount of cyclists in Jersey?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

It is very much a double-edged sword. Obviously, like everyone else, we have suffered with COVID, which made people be very, very cautious, which is to be commended. Also on the buses, people were not using the buses because of COVID, even though masks were being worn. We have had reports back from several of the cycle shops that they cannot get bicycles in fast enough. They were going out the door as fast as they were coming in, so lots of people have taken up cycling. I do not know exact numbers, but we know that the uptake on cycling has been quite tremendous. We have had people taking notes on the cycle routes into town from the west. We were lucky in the old days that basically we inherited the western cycle route, which was the old railway. We did not inherit the eastern cycle route. That was sold off, I believe in the late 1930s, and housing was built there, so cycle routes to the east is something that I am working on now, but we would really love to have the whole Island sorted from east to west to be able to cycle. At the moment one can cycle from Corbière Lighthouse through to Havre des Pas without leaving the cycle track, crossing one or 2 roads, but without leaving the cycle track. I would love to extend that right the way through the Island, if possible.

2.5.8 Mr. C. Maloney:

How much has it cost the taxpayer so far for this anecdotal increase in the number of cyclists?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Are we talking about the subsidies for the electric bikes, which is what we paid for? We have done 2 tranches of subsidies and I believe that was probably about £95,000 for the 2. I do not have the exact figures with me, but it is that area. But most people have bought their own bicycles, be it traditional cycle or electric, so people have really embraced it. I signed an order about 9 months ago for the use of cargo bikes, which are a lot bigger and a lot stronger. If people were to do small deliveries in the town of St. Helier, they can use a cargo bike to transport goods around. They are very solid, well-made bikes, so that was a slight change of the law, but that has worked out very well and I have seen about 20 or 30 cargo bikes whizzing around town making deliveries, which obviously is nice and green and making the air cleaner.

2.5.9 Mr. P. Vieira:

What monitoring of electric bike voucher schemes has been undertaken to ensure that bikes are still in use and was this a good use of public money?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I think it was an excellent use of public money. It has encouraged more and more people to use electric bikes. As I mentioned, we have had the Dutch Cycling Academy over and of course the Netherlands is very, very flat, but we do have quite a few hills, so the electric boost button on the

bike is very welcome by many, many people, but as I say, we see the bikes in use on a daily basis coming in and out of town. You will probably see a few parked up in Royal Square on the way out. We have licensed a company called EVie to do the rental electric bikes scheme. You will probably see the bright yellow bikes around town and parked up everywhere, but as I say, take-up has been very, very good.

2.5.10 Mr. P. Vieira:

Are there any future plans to bring in bikes for young people? Are there any future plans to bring in bikes, E.V. (electric vehicle) bikes, for the young people and people under 18? Sorry for the very confusing question.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I am not quite sure if I have got that. Was that to bring in bikes for younger people? **[Aside]** Right. They are freely available in the shops, bicycles for young ... E.V. bikes, I beg your pardon. Right, now we know. Electric bikes for young children are regulated. You have to be - I think it is - about 14 because they can get up to quite a speed, but the law was changed for E.V. bikes, but that was a stipulation and basically mirrors what is happening in the U.K. (United Kingdom). There are other devices which are illegal, such as e-scooters and so on, which can get quite a turn of speed. I do have a problem with e-scooters at the moment because if one is sat on a conventional moped, shall we say, one is sat down with the arms braced, but if one is stood up and suddenly the front wheel locks, you have got nowhere to go but forward at possibly 25 miles an hour, which can be very dangerous. We are very keen to encourage cycling, but there is the age limit of 14.

2.6 Ms. C. Blackstone of the Minister for Treasury and Resources regarding funding the new hospital

How does Jersey plan to fund the new hospital?

Deputy S.J. Pinel of St. Clement (The Minister for Treasury and Resources):

A very good and direct question. The States Assembly has approved the building of Our Hospital for a maximum of £804.5 million as part of an amendment to the approved 2021 Government Plan. Some of these costs had already been approved in previous Government Plans and decisions and have been funded by amounts through various taxes by Government, which pay for services for Islanders. The remaining costs of up to £756 million were agreed to be funded by borrowing money, most likely through the issue of a bond. This is a way governments and companies raise money, by selling a bond. The Government receives money and agrees to pay back the same amount in the future and to pay interest every year. It is important to have a plan in place to be able to pay for both the interest and the eventual repayment of borrowing. For the hospital project, we plan to use investment returns on the Strategic Reserve to cover both of these costs. The Strategic Reserve or rainy day fund, as it is known, is like a savings account for the Government, but one that is there in case of a really serious problem, for example, a natural disaster or the loss of a key industry. It is therefore not something we generally use. There is about £1 billion in that reserve and this is invested to get an income, like interest on a savings account. The Assembly agreed that we can use some of the income on the reserve to pay for the costs of borrowing. This includes the interest paid every year and the eventual repayment of the loan, saving up the returns over a number of years. Our calculations show that we can pay these amounts and still end up with a bigger reserve, which is important to be able to continue to protect the Island. Building a new hospital is aligned with our common strategic priorities of improving Islanders' well-being and mental and physical health, but it is important that we can also afford it. Fortunately this solution gives us both of these things.

2.6.1 Ms. C. Blackstone:

How prevalent are Russian funds in Jersey?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

It is a stretch as a supplementary question.

Deputy S.J. Pinel:

It is not quite related to the question, and they are not.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Are there any other supplementary questions for the Minister for Treasury and Resources? No, thank you.

2.7 Ms. C. Tham of the Assistant Minister for Social Security regarding the housing crisis

Does the Minister consider the present housing price situation as sustainable?

Deputy J.M. Maçon (Assistant Minister for Social Security):

Merçi pour la question. The simple answer to this very important question is no. The high cost of housing in Jersey is not sustainable in the longer term in most areas of the housing market. Housing is expensive in Jersey. House prices are measured by the Jersey House Price Index, which has seen prices rise sharply in recent years. The cost of one, 2, 3 and 4-bedroom homes reached the highest average price to date in 2021. Therefore the *Gouvernement d'Jèrri* has made addressing the lack of affordable properties in the housing market a policy priority. We, along with partners such as Andium Homes, are building more homes, including social rental and assisted purchase homes. This includes an 80 per cent increase in the housing starts by 2025, which equates to almost 1,000 new homes over a 5-year period. This year Andium will complete a further 159 new homes to add to the 561 it already completed towards its target of delivering 3,000 new homes by 2030. In 2023, Andium will complete a further 279 homes. Rezoning land: the States Assembly has just debated the bridging Island Plan and this will unlock various sites for development for homes of various descriptions, including first-time buyer and affordable homes. Changing construction methods: as an Island, the cost of importing materials for the construction industry makes building homes more expensive than in other places. This in turns feed into house prices. The Minister for Housing and Communities is currently visiting Poland to meet companies involved in M.M.C. (modern methods of construction) which uses modern construction technologies to reduce the cost of building homes. This is something we want to introduce in Jersey. There are other measures to address housing supply. Legal ownership: the Minister for Housing and Communities has already approved a law change that prevents non-residents purchasing properties in Jersey by share transfer and further work is being undertaken in this area to tackle demand. Migration controls: the States Assembly has supported the Government of Jersey by changing legislation which will enable greater control over migration to the Island. This will also help reduce housing demand. The Minister for Housing and Communities is creating a better homes action plan, available to read online, which shows that the Government of Jersey understands the problem and are acting to address that. There has been a lot we have been doing in this area.

2.7.1 Ms. C. Tham:

What are you going to do for the current struggle for housing?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

In the last Government Plan, the Assembly approved a pot of £10 million in order to allow for policy development in this area. Currently the Minister is looking to form some form of scheme along the lines of assisted purchase. This is where the Government might assist individuals to buy properties. For example, we may pay for 25 per cent of a property to allow the rest of the costs of 75 per cent to be paid by the homeowner. The Government of Jersey then gets that money back once that property is sold, which then means we can recycle it and use it to help someone else. That is one of options

that we are currently pursuing, but that is something we are looking to do. We have to be very careful because the Government have a problem sometimes of getting too involved in the house market and what that can do is just lead to inflated prices across the board, which ends up helping no one except of course those selling the assets.

2.7.2 Ms. C. Tham:

What does the Minister plan to do to stop house prices from rising?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Again, it is a really good question because we do live in a capitalist society where of course people have the right to sell a property for what they deem it is worth and people have the right to buy a property for what they agree to purchase it for.

[14:30]

One thing which we have done, and it was done very recently, is there used to be a mechanism which was called a share transfer, which is where companies could purchase a property, so if you did not live on Jersey you could purchase a property. We have changed the law so that for any new builds under the share property regime, people can no longer do that for new builds, which means that we are working towards a system whereby people who live on Jersey will be only able to buy property. Now, by reducing those people who can buy properties, we are hoping that that will assist to keep the prices down but also, more importantly, help people who live here to have their own home.

2.7.3 Ms. I. Hickman:

Why do you favour the rich to buy houses without having residency?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Sorry, can you just repeat that question?

Ms. I. Hickman:

Why do you favour the rich to buy houses without having residency?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I think what the Member is referring is the 1(1)(k) regime, which allows very rich individuals to come into the Island to purchase property under licence. Historically the reason why the States Assembly has agreed to that is because these particularly wealthy individuals contribute a large amount of tax income to the Island, which means that for that one person they might give in to the Exchequer or to the Island the equivalent of up to 5 or 10 workers, so the trade-off is the Island gets more money in by allowing these very wealthy individuals to come into the Island instead of them having to bring in more people in order to make up the same amount of tax income to the Island. That is why it is done in that way. There are of course many ethical considerations around that particular regime, which no doubt we will consider.

2.7.4 Ms. I. Hickman:

But surely that will disadvantage the current people looking for housing.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Not necessarily, because these 1(1)(k) - or they used to be 1(1)(k), now it is 2(1)(e) - individuals purchase very large properties, so we are talking mansions and so on. This section of the property market is usually far out of the grasp of most local people anyway, so there is an argument that it does not make much of a difference to the ordinary person on the Island.

2.7.5 Ms. T. Pawsey:

Do you have an estimated price for the number of homes that we will be building and will they be affordable for the cost of living in Jersey?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

We do have various schemes working with Andium Homes, one of which is the assisted purchase scheme. I think the figures I am given ... here we go. Andium Homebuy, that is what it is called. Andium Homebuy offers buyers an opportunity to buy at 75 per cent of the property value, with the remaining 25 per cent of the value being deferred indefinitely. For example, this would reduce the cost of, say, a 2-bedroom home apartment valued at £400,000 down to just £300,000. Anyone interested in purchasing property with the assistance of Homebuy is encouraged to register via Andium Homes. What I would say of course is purchasing a property is not available to everyone, it is not something that everyone wants to do. Renting of course is also a very significant and important part of the market that the Minister is also working on. Sorry, if I have misunderstood your question, I would be more than happy hear it again.

2.7.6 Ms. L. Pawsey:

But would you not argue that £300,000 is still too high for Islanders to pay?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I think it depends on the section of the market. Ideally we would always like to reduce it further in order to increase home ownership to as many individuals as possible. It is an interesting point which of course I will take back to the Minister on your behalf.

2.7.7 Mr. S. Hugo:

Does the Deputy feel that there could be a housing problem in Jersey?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I think that was the original question to which we said, yes, effectively it is the flip of the same question. If I have misunderstood, please repeat the question. But I understood the question to be: is there a housing problem in Jersey? By that I understand the question to mean: is there a housing shortage? The shortage is, yes, at the moment we do not have enough homes on the Island in order to accommodate everyone who is living on the Island; that is how I have understood the question.

2.7.8 Mr. S. Hugo:

My thoughts were that as the housing prices increase it could drive people off the Island, which ...

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Sorry, Mr. Hugo, I have to insist on a question.

Mr. S. Hugo:

All right, that is fine, thanks.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

No problem, thank you.

2.7.9 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Has the Minister thought about putting price cuts on houses to stop the house prices from increasing?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

It is something which of course is mentioned more so in the rental sector about house prices. It would be a fundamental change to how Jersey operates in the way of a capitalist society if we were to do

that and that would require a significant political change within the Island. At the moment we have not sought to dictate who can sell a property for what price in the Island, no.

2.7.10 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

How does the Minister expect young people who do not have high-income jobs to buy their own houses because not everyone goes to university?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Firstly, being a former Minister for Education, can I say you do not need a degree in order to do well in this society? You can have a very good apprenticeship and they are just as good in order to succeed in the Island or indeed go straight into the work and work in industry as well. Sorry, I will get off my soapbox now. It is a very good point and it is a challenge and it is a challenge for every society, not just Jersey, about low-income families or individuals being able to get into home ownership and we have to be realistic. That is not ever going to be a possibility for everyone, which is why it is very important that we also deal and tackle the rental market, in particular with Andium Homes, which we have done by reducing the amount of rent that is paid by capping at 80 per cent of the market rate in order to protect those individuals who find themselves in that situation.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you, Minister. Was that a supplementary question? I do apologise. Ms. Tam, do you have a final supplementary question? No, thank you.

2.8 Ms. L. Chambers of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding assisted dying

Will the Minister advise what strategies will be included within the assisted dying law?

Deputy G.C. Guida of St. Lawrence (The Minister for Home Affairs):

Last November the States Assembly became the first Parliament in the British Isles to decide in principle that assisted dying should be permitted. Detailed proposals for an assisted dying service in Jersey are currently being developed and the next step is for these proposals to be considered by the States Assembly this coming autumn. It is vital that these proposals include strong safeguards to protect people choosing an assisted death and to protect the people who may be involved in providing this service, for example, doctors and nurses. Some important safeguards have already been agreed by the Assembly during their debate last autumn. These include ensuring that the person making a request has the capacity to make the decision that they wish to end their life. That person that shows interest to access assisted dying must also be voluntary. This means that the decision would be their own choice, freely made with no pressure or coercion from others, continuing meaning that their choice is settled and stays the same and fully-informed. The person must be well-informed about their disease and their care and treatment options before proceeding. Further safeguards include establishing a pre-approval process which will determine if the person requesting an assisted death meets the criteria, as set out in the law. The pre-approval process will include a cooling-off period to ensure a person is certain about their decision to proceed. It will also allow for a person to change their mind at any point during the process and decide not to proceed with an assisted death. An important safeguard for medical professionals is that the law will include what is known as a conscientious objection clause. This allows doctors, nurses and other professionals to choose if they want to participate in an assisted dying service in Jersey and they will not have to do this if it goes against their beliefs. A similar process of opting out is used for other medical procedures, including the termination of pregnancy. Details on these safeguards and further measures will be presented to the Assembly for their consideration later this year.

2.8.1 Ms. L. Chambers:

As you say, it had been agreed in principle in working with the Minister, what is the likelihood of the advancement of this scheme?

Deputy G.C. Guida:

This is a good question. Theoretically, the in-principle approval has been obtained, it has been voted in this Assembly. However, the Jersey States Assembly is hovering in their decision, if they wish to change their mind and vote something else later this year or in several years to come, they are still allowed to do so.

2.8.2 Ms. I. Hickman:

Personhood is the concept of that which makes a living thing a person. If a living thing is not a person, does it really have the same rights, including the right to life, as persons do?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Minister, a question of philosophy.

Deputy G.C. Guida:

Thank you for the extremely sideways question. I am not quite sure how to term the answer. I think one of the philosophical concepts that helped States Members decide on assisted dying is the right for animals to die. We have been euthanising animals for ever and of course there are very, very strong rules about that. Many States Members have argued that if you legally had to stop the suffering of an animal, why will you not be allowed to stop the suffering of a human being if they wanted to do so? I am not sure I answered the question but it was quite essential in deciding whether assisted dying should be available to humans.

2.8.3 Ms. C. Blackstone:

Are there any plans for an exemption to the cooling-off period in the case of any Islanders whose progression of disease might prevent them from giving confirmation of consent?

Deputy G.C. Guida:

That is another interesting question on a couple of levels. There is a conflict between dealing with the issue as quickly as possible because in this particular case you are talking about a person whose life is unbearable. How long do we want to prolong their life if they decided otherwise? At the same time we want to make sure that their decision is final in that case but we also want to make it prompt so that it will not prolong their suffering unnecessarily. Could you repeat the question, please?

Ms. C. Blackstone:

Are there any plans to make an exemption for the cooling-off period, given Islanders whose progression of their disease might prevent confirmation of consent?

Deputy G.C. Guida:

Sorry, I knew there was something really important to come to as well. As the law is being written we are looking at informed consent and capacity. In other words, we want the people who make that decision to be aware of what they are doing, and this is a second problem in that some people may want to make the decision in advance, knowing that they will lose that capacity. The way that we are structuring the law, this will not be possible. We know it is a serious problem but the problem is how far you extend it. As a very good example, somebody might find that they have Alzheimer's disease and that their mental capacities will decrease with time up to not have mental capacity at all. Some of them might say: "Well, I have got a prognosis that this will decrease over the next 3 years and a year and a half from now I just want to end it." A year and a half from then they might not have the capacity and that, again, would fall outside of the law. We know that it is a problem that does not have an easy answer.

2.8.4 Ms. B. Pesco:

Could you say that by allowing euthanasia this could lead to people being discouraged of going to hospital for treatment?

[14:45]

Deputy G.C. Guida:

Not at all. This is just an adjunct to other possibilities. In fact we have very, very strong plans to improve end-of-life care in Jersey, so people who have a terminal illness will be kept better in Jersey, and that is just one option and it will be made as a completely separate option.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Ms. Chambers, do you have a final supplementary question?

Ms. L. Chambers:

No, I do not, thank you.

2.9 Mr. C. Maloney of the Minister for Children and Education regarding free school meals

What action is the Minister proposing to address the provision of 3 school meals across the Island?

Deputy S.M. Wickenden (The Minister for Children and Education):

Best until last question. I want to thank Mr. Maloney, for he is as passionate as I am about making this happen and challenges me regularly, and I want to thank him for that first. Work has already been undertaken to provide free school meals in 5 primary schools. This offer will expand to all primary schools when the serveries are installed. The 5 primary schools detailed below have been included in a pilot study. This study had allowed us at sites to analyse and evaluate the servers and to agree on future service requirements. Listening to the voice of children who use the service and their parents and carers have been integral to getting this information. The pilot scheme ends in summer this year, therefore, the procurement strategy and details of service specifications have been developed to ensure that C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) is ready to go out to tender for a contractor who can expand on the service over the next 3 years. The first step will be to test the local market with an expression of interest for companies who wish to tender for the contract. We are aiming to expand with a further 4 schools in autumn this term, totalling 9 schools in the pilot going forward.

2.9.1 Mr. C. Maloney:

As this is a sort of tangential question, do you believe there should be better funding for schools and, if so, what would this entail?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

It is indeed tangential but, Minister, I will allow it.

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

Extremely, of course you will, Sir, it is an important question. We have worked very closely, we put an extra £11.4 million into the schools in this last Government Plan and we assess what that means for the schools and their spending and, as it is taxpayers' money, we try and make sure that we budget appropriately. We help where we can and we do uplift in school funding if there is a requirement above the budgets, and we have been doing that over the last couple of years. At the moment I think we are at the level where over COVID and over the requirements that the schools have told us they have needed we have managed to fund the deficit and give more headroom funding in the last Government Plan. It always will be worth waiting to see how that is spent, what the cost-of-living rises will be due to Brexit, the Ukraine war and the likes that we are having right now. Schools are

able to ask for more if they need it and we do keep an eye on that. I think we are appropriately funded now, based on the information that we have had over the last 4 years.

2.9.2 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Can the Government assist schools with the food prices in secondary school canteens, as they are expensive?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Can the Government assist with the price of school canteen meals?

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

It is a conversation we are having with the providers of school meals at the moment, certainly with the cost of food prices, the cost of petrol right now. It is an active conversation we are having about subsidising to make sure that we do not put the prices up in the school meals, we want to keep them at the levels they are or make sure that we can help wherever we can. There are ongoing conversations right now happening to make sure that we are not going to put higher pressure on the cost of food within schools.

2.9.3 Ms. I. Hickman:

Why 5 primary schools and why not all?

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

Excellent question. Nearly all of our primary schools were built a long time ago and they were not built with the ability to provide and serve food in a modern health and safety fashion. If we are going to put food into schools we need to make sure that we are serving it from somewhere. Most schools do not have the room to have those serveries, we cannot just throw in a desk. We are having to go through and assess each school to make sure how we could put a safe, modern, health and safety standard servery that we could provide food to children on. A lot of the schools do not have the room and we are having to look at building extensions. We are looking at other schools where we need to reorganise how they store equipment so we can use that space, and that is the work that is going on right now. But until we get the serveries in all the schools we are not going to be able to do it all right now and that is the challenge.

2.9.4 Ms. I. Hickman:

If every person in primary school is having then food every day, what are you doing about dietary requirements?

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

Another excellent question, thank you. It is something that is a whole part of the provision of food in schools, which it has to be about nutritional food. It is not just about putting food for an amount of money in front of children, it is about making sure there is an educational programme. In the expression of interest that we have put forward I have made sure it is absolutely clear that if anyone wants to come and provide meals within schools it has to come alongside education about nutritional food and why it is good, why you eat such good food, and it is about delivering nutritional food in schools as well. It is not just about burgers and chips and making sure that is in the schools; that is all part of the programme that we are putting forward.

2.9.5 Ms. C. Tam:

How do you intend on supporting children outside of school if like in school that is their only source of meal, if you know what I mean?

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

That is a difficult question about how do you make sure. I think what we are trying to aim for here is making sure that there is a provision within each school so that there is an option for children in low-income families to always have a meal at school and for children that are not in low-income families, where their parents can save time in the morning by not having to make lunch boxes or prepare that kind of food and take that stress and time away, where they can spend more quality time with their children so that they do not have to do such things. Outside of school I think it is a lot harder, we do look at what we can do during school holidays to try and provide within the clubs that go on. But that is really where my remit sits and that is where I am trying to get us to in the first instance.

2.9.6 Ms. L. Pawsey:

Why is it taking you so long to introduce free school meals in primary schools and secondary schools, especially if children going hungry has been a thing for such a while?

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

The primary schools are about logistics. It is about I wish we were closer. Over COVID we would have been really not able to put building works within schools. You have had your one-way systems, you had your masks on, you had classroom bubbles. If I were to put an entire building process where you had workmen and dust and all of that, it would have just made things even worse. COVID has slowed down the progression of what we were trying to achieve within this important area, so that is there. In secondary schools, I guess what we have not done yet is it is not free yet and we have not put the money in as far as it goes. A lot of the secondary schools do do meals but they go through Flourish and they are on a subsidised value, so we do subsidise the meals within that place; they are just not free yet.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Supplementary, Ms. Pawsey? Thank you. I have to take the last question because I believe, Ms. Rodrigues, you already asked a question on this subject. Yes, I am afraid you can only ask the once. Ms. Filleul, a question for the Minister.

2.9.7 Ms. R. Filleul:

This may be a bit tangential but does the Minister believe it is appropriate for there to be only one non-fee-paying 6th-form college in Jersey?

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

We will allow that one.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

We will allow that one.

Deputy S.M. Wickenden:

I think it is about choice and option for that. I am glad we have a non-fee-paying 6th form school and I think they all do very, very well. But, no, I do think that it is a long history, there is a lot of background to either fully fee-paid, partially fee-paid or not fee-paid at all. I think it gives good options and it gives to the Islanders, and I think that is what they want.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

In which case it brings me to the final supplementary from Mr. Maloney, if he so wishes. No, thank you. In which case, thank you. That is our final question with notice for the Ministers, so I thank the Ministers and Assistant Ministers for their help there.

3. Questions to Ministers without notice - The Chief Minister

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

That moves us to questions without notice for the Chief Minister, we have 15 minutes. At present I will check with the Greffier, is the Chief Minister able to hear us?

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

He is, yes.

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I am ready and willing and able.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Excellent. Welcome, Chief Minister. Good to see you as well, thank you. Currently I have no questions on the list, so if anybody would like a question for the Chief Minister on any subject. In which case Ms. Filleul, you were first, thank you.

3.1 Ms. R. Filleul:

Why is conversion therapy still legal in Jersey?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré (The Chief Minister):

It is not one that has come across my desk recently but I do understand the concerns that you are raising. My understanding in terms of looking at the whole range of issues surrounding that area is that it is an area that the relevant department is looking at and keeps under review. As to whether it should be made illegal or not, I think that is going to be a question that will no doubt come to the next Assembly in due course.

3.1.1 Ms. R. Filleul:

Does the Chief Minister believe that conversion therapy should be illegal or legal on the Island?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I would have to say and to be perfectly honest, with the various events that are going on in the rest of the world at the moment, it is not something I have given full attention to, particularly in the last few months. I would want to understand it fully before I stated an opinion on that front, I am afraid. But I do understand the concerns and the issues it raises.

3.2 Ms. B. Walker:

In the U.K. and most European countries companies with a certain number of employees have to publish gender pay gap reports. Why is this not the case in Jersey?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

One of the issues we always have in Jersey, which is one of the fantastic things about living in the community we do, is that we are a small community, so many of the companies do publish that data. From memory, a small company in the U.K. is not required to publish, if I recall correctly and a small company in the U.K. would be considered probably a medium to large company in Jersey. From memory, I think something like 80 per cent to 90 per cent of employers employ something like less than 10 people; it will be roughly that sort of figure. That is why to date we have encouraged the larger employers on Island to follow that route of publication voluntarily and, in essence, the last update was that it was going to be reviewed again at the end of this year to see what that take-up has been. Once that has been assessed it is not impossible that it could then be made mandatory but the view was, to date, that the voluntary approach was preferred. Again, I do have a slight mental lapse

at the moment but I think we published our second report on the gender pay gap I see earlier or more recently.

3.3 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Are you thinking of running for election this year, if so, would you like to be Chief Minister again?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

As I have said, I am certainly thinking of running for election again. I will be putting a final confirmation out one way or the other basically in the next couple of weeks. I said I would announce my position before Easter.

3.3.1 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

What would you choose to ensure that less Members are stepping down from their roles to keep consistency within the Government?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

It is a very good question. I think there are 2 or 3 things in there. I have been in politics for 16 years and obviously 4 years in the present role. I think the job, if that is the right expression for it, has significantly changed, certainly in my time. I think a recognition, whether it is within the media, within the public, would understand what that role entails now for any politician is rather important. That then might stop reversing the kind of trend of always berating politicians for everything that we do sometimes get wrong. But at the end of the day the person you will be voting in at some point may meet Boris Johnson or may well meet the Taoiseach of Ireland or the First Ministers of Scotland or Wales or Ambassadors and so.

[15:00]

In other words, for me the job has much more moved on from someone who promises to put a pedestrian crossing at the bottom of your road and I am a good chap, please vote for me. I think the challenge I would say, which is about making sure then hopefully you get good and credible people in the Assembly, is it is there for the voters to make sure and challenge those candidates and make sure they have really the discipline and understanding to push through the areas that they are proposing. That means, are you going to do it, are you going to pay for it and will it work? If one can get that happening and that then makes the job of politicians as a whole a lot easier. Then I think at that point if we then can stick to the issues and doing things for the benefit of the Island, then you are more likely to have Members continuing and offering that long-term experience in service that I think we all long for.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you. I apologise, I cannot remember if that was a supplementary; twice I have done that now. Apologies, Chief Minister, as well.

3.4 Mr. C. Maloney:

How do you intend to stop Jersey from being used as a political football, as seen recently in the French fishing fiasco?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I do not think you can ever stop any politician - and including from other jurisdictions - trying to generate an alliance for what might be perceived sometimes as their own particularly national agenda and rather than international matters. The use of a definition of a fiasco, I might challenge that. I think I would turn around and say it has been a challenge and after a lot of quite careful negotiation - and I know that sometimes can be frustrating - we now seem to be in a position where that first phase of identifying and agreeing the number of permits that could be issued to French fishers in our

waters. I think, hopefully, we have moved on from that and the heat to date appears to have been taken out of that. I will find out more literally just before the purdah period, I believe, when we are finally meeting in Brittany and we are going to have some regional discussions. But the fundamental line we took all the way through, which the feedback we have had does seem to have been respected, particularly among other European jurisdictions, was very much data-driven. It was saying if you can prove you have fished in our waters and that complies with the agreement that Britain and Europe signed, then you will get a permit. If you cannot prove it, then, unfortunately, we have now moved on from that. It has been a challenge. How we do that in the future? Part of that is about talking more and more in all sorts of fora, whether it is Ministers or whether it is Back-Bencher politicians, I have never particularly liked that expression, and making sure that those jurisdictions do understand us and if there are problems they come and talk to us.

3.5 Ms. I. Hickman:

We are pleased that women can now control their own tax returns. But what about women who want to have access to their tax returns, however cannot have access to them without permission from their partner or ex-partner?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Again it is a level of detail I am not sighted on. I am unclear how a woman could not get access to her own tax return without permission. As far as I am aware, I was not aware that was an issue. If it is an issue I am very happy to take that away and raise it with the Minister for Treasury and Resources and the Comptroller of Taxes. My understanding is that should not be an issue but I am happy to have clarification.

3.5.1 Ms. I. Hickman:

If someone was married before the law got put in place, they cannot get access to their tax returns without having to have written permission from their partner or ex-partner.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Is that a question, Ms. Hickman?

Ms. I. Hickman:

No, it is a statement.

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I think that position is changing, I have to say.

3.6 Ms. E. Bailey:

Is there any progress for all women to get free sanitary products in Jersey?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Hopefully you are aware of the announcements that were made last week, which is for free products to be available in schools. That addresses certain ages. On all of these things it is a balance and on all of these things it is about making sure that (a) we target people who, depending on what the issue is you are dealing with, are the ones who are most affected by whatever the issue is. It can be money; it can be other issues. So the Minister for Social Security would like to continue the progress that has been made but obviously the first step, which starts happening in September of this year, is the announcement that was made last week, which was in schools. Then after that we then assess and we keep moving forward. On all of these things we also have to balance on an Island, even though we are in a very, very good position, we always have to consider resources and how they are best allocated. In this case it is about money and therefore is the allocation to everybody, including those

who can afford it, for free the best choice versus making sure that those who presently might struggle in terms of monetary issues are first targeted.

3.7 Mr. P. Vieira:

Given the current Ukraine crisis, what is Jersey doing to support them, both financially and in terms of accommodating them?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Did you hear that, Chief Minister?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I did and I am very glad for the question. So, within about 3 days of the invasion, Jersey Overseas Aid had identified £350,000, which was then immediately effectively instant money that went across. Within a week, which was a result of the phone call I had with the Minister for Treasury and Resources, very swiftly while I was away we announced a further £1 million that then was paid through. That was announced on the Thursday or the Friday immediately after the invasion, so roughly a week, and was implemented, the first tranche of that was being spent on the ground in Ukraine or on the Polish border by the following Monday. The Island to date has raised around £2 million and indeed there was an up-to-date infographic, if you look on Google under “Where will my money go for the Ukraine appeal?” it gives the breakdown, the present figure is £2.1 million and has been raised from all sources. The next issue is to deal with those Ukrainians who have direct connections with members of the family over in Jersey and that is presently happening. We have had 14 in to date, we are potentially expecting somewhere between 50 and 60, and what we want to make sure is that we can give the right levels of support. That means health, that includes being vaccinated from COVID. It means any health support they might need. If there are families, education support in place. Cash support, social security support, all those type of areas and making sure those packages are ready and in place. Then in parallel to that we are then exploring what more we can do and in fact there will be further news later in the week in terms of activities and discussions that are going on. But we are very much in active discussion with the relevant authorities in the relevant jurisdictions to see what else one can do and to learn from their present experiences and also their forecasts. This is a human catastrophe and that is the polite expression, an understatement. We should be under no illusions of the human cost this war is going to have. We, in my view, need to do as much as we possibly can. Sometimes the Jersey experience in the past has been, by applying money essentially as close to where the catastrophe is taking place, that can sometimes be more effective, given our size relative to, for example, taking another 50 individuals into the Island. But that is something we need to assess. The first point is to get cash in place fast. The second point is deal with it fast for people who are coming to this Island. Just as a guide, with the U.N.H.C.R. (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) we are the highest per capita contributor to their programmes at the moment.

3.8 Ms. T. Beckwolden:

Why does all sex education in schools only cater to heterosexual couples?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Sorry, could you repeat the question?

Ms. T. Beckwolden:

Why does all sex education in schools only cater to heterosexual couples?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I have to say I do not understand the question. In terms of the education side, I had always understood, and that was my understanding particularly from the Minister for Children and Education, that it covered all aspects.

3.9 Mr. S. Hugo:

How will you increase voter turnout?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Also a very good question and it is not a matter that the Government does. That question is possibly better directed to presently the Deputy Greffier. But I rather suspect she is not in the hot seat for that question. There are a whole range of complications in this area and it is not really in my role as Chief Minister to answer the question, but I will give you an opinion. One of the problems sometimes we have had in the past is that many people have registered to vote but then for whatever reason do not choose to vote on the day. That obviously therefore impacts what looks like an impact on turnout. Because, if you have a lot of people registered, but they have done it just for the convenience, and then do not vote, that means you do have a lower voter turnout. I do have to say, with the new system we have coming in place, it is an interesting experiment that this Island will be going through in terms of democracy. I have quite strong views that I do not like the system that is coming through. That is my personal view. I think the loss of Senators is unfortunate. That might be the polite expression. But it is the system. That is my personal view and obviously the majority of the Assembly voted for the present system. It is hoped that by making it contested elections and by making it more equal in size that therefore the electorate will buy in more and we see more at the moment that there is a lot of activity and a lot of excitement around these elections that more people will vote. That is yet to be seen and let us hope they are right and that this whole change is worth the outcome. The plea I would make, as I have said, is (a) use your vote; (b) please challenge the candidates and make sure to look beyond the sound bites essentially. Because, at the end of the day, whatever your political view, I would hope you want, in my view, thoughtful political representatives. Ones who understand issues and ones who will make rational decisions.

3.10 Ms. L. Pawsey:

Why in the reopening of our economy did you opt for travel to be opened first knowing the risk you were placing the current Islanders in when we had thousands of new cases per day after the reopening?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

That is a very good question, thank you. COVID has been a very challenging time. In fact you will see the impacts; there is a whole range of work that we wanted to do that the response to COVID has effectively sucked the resource out of the system and we focused very much on protecting people's lives. The approach has been very much lives and livelihoods, so lives were first. In 2020 we did not have excess deaths and in 2021 it is looking like either the death rate will be similar to normal parameters or will again be slightly lower than normal, but those figures have yet to be confirmed. So, from that perspective, it would seem to indicate that the majority, hopefully most of the decisions we took, achieved the outcome we were looking for. What you have also then got to make sure is that, firstly, and we said this from the very beginning, when we come out of the pandemic we have to make sure there is something left within the Island for the Island then to carry on. That is from an economic point of view; that is people having their jobs. Because, if you do not have your job, that leads to all sorts of issues including increases in mental health. So the connectivity of the Island is one of those factors.

[15:15]

We are an outward-looking Island. We have many, many Islanders who have family members elsewhere in the world, either close-ish in Europe or other parts more east of Europe, or from the United Kingdom. So that connectivity is very important. One other matter is that statistically, if we are looking at more recent areas, with the very good vaccination rate that we have, the statistics were showing that the vaccine is working and that the death rates, relative to flu, is lower than that of flu. Therefore, with that basis, you do not really have the political right to then shut down the Island. Also, as we made I hope fairly clear a number of times, particularly in the last 6 months, probably longer, I think from the end of 2020, is you need at one point to focus less on the absolute numbers, with a good vaccination rate, of infections, of positive cases, and make sure that what is happening within the hospital and making sure the health services are not overwhelmed. All the way through, and I do continue to say, to date we have achieved that. So we did not recklessly, for want of a better expression, think we have 1,000 cases and just ignore it; it was a very considered decision made on the medical advice and always taking account of vaccination rates and obviously of strains of COVID that we are aware of.

3.11 Mr. M. Cumming:

Given that you are giving such support for the Ukrainians coming to the Island, can you ensure that the same parameters can and will be afforded to Jersey citizens?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Essentially, much of the financial support is consistent with the support that Jersey citizens who might, for example, have health issues or need financial support, it will be consistent with most of what Jersey citizens can access, or more so accelerating the ability of these individuals to access the support packages I am talking in the main, I hasten to add. Obviously what we are dealing with is incredibly difficult circumstances of people who have in essence probably been bombed out of their homes. This is the first significant war we have seen on European soil, putting Yugoslavia aside, but since the Second World War. It is therefore appropriate that we do help wherever we can on what is a human catastrophe.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

In the interests of time we are going to have to take one last first question, which is from Mr. Arnell. We will have been going for 25 minutes so we will not be able to ask the second question I am afraid. Unless people want to extend for 5 minutes. Are you available, Chief Minister, for an extra 5 minutes?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I am available for 5 minutes. I was meant to make a phone call at 3.00 p.m. and hopefully they will be available at some point, but let us keep going for 5 minutes.

3.12 Mr. R. Arnell:

What measures have been put in place to prevent and respond to future pandemics?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

The point about future pandemics is let us get out of the end game of this present one by the way. There is a COVID review taking place, which is meant to be a lessons-learned exercise. They will be reporting, from memory I think it is the end of July, and that will therefore give some indications of where they think we could have done better and therefore what else we need to do. My overall perspective at this stage is that the whole system of Government probably needs a bit of time to stabilise as it comes out of what has been a most incredible period in my experience, particularly having led a team as in the Council of Ministers to lead the Island through the last 4 years, whether it has been Brexit, whether it has been COVID, whether it has been now the Ukraine crisis, and obviously all the business as usual and the transformation side. So, for example, with COVID, what

has been brought home to me is the real importance of good data to base decisions on. Obviously we know we have programmes in play that we need to have, which we call COVID Health and Social Recovery, of greater investment in things like mental health and all those areas. We need to stabilise and see how those systems respond and also, for example, where extra resource was put in place for COVID, whether it continues to be needed or in a different guise. That is going to take another 6 months to a year for us to have that clear picture of, as everything settles down again, what needs to remain in place. But, as I said, first step, COVID review outcome or reporting in July.

3.13 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Does the Chief Minister think that your position in society and your age means that you cannot fully relate to a lot of your society, such as youth, those in poverty or females, therefore not making the best decisions for the whole of the Island?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

No. I will expand on that slightly. Whatever age you are as a politician, and is that not an ageist question I suppose, but whatever age you are as a politician you are always going to be somewhere out as in one generational direction or another. I probably need to point out I do have 2 teenage children who probably do point out the errors and archaic ways in my thinking from time to time. But equally that is why we do have, I would hope, (a) a relatively rounded team to make sure that we do cover a whole range of areas; that was one of the thoughts when I put the team together, and (b) that is why you do have advisers and public servants to also make sure hopefully that you do not overlook or think wrongly, if that makes sense, of particular areas. But overall we have tried to make sure that we do look at all sorts of generations. We have had a policy around putting children first. Although we can always have done more, we have made quite considerable changes in a whole range of areas when you compare it to where we were in 2018. I do think there are areas that need further work. Whether it is at the younger generation or also at the older generation.

13.13.1 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Although the Government is becoming more diverse, we are lacking certain types of people in Government. How do you think that positions in Parliament should be publicised best to diversify the Government further?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Please do not take this the wrong way, obviously there is a difference between the Government and the Parliament. The public elect the Parliament. Fundamentally, I do not think you should interfere in the democratic right of who people want to elect. That is the fundamental basis of our system. Ultimately that is about making sure that there are no barriers or as few barriers as possible to people wishing to stand. That is probably the most important principle. In terms of forming the Government, you are then constrained by the pool of people, looking at politicians, that the public have elected. For me, I hope I am blind whether it is gender, sex, age, anything. For me it is making sure that I have good and credible people around the table who can work together as a team. You will disagree with each other at different points. Hopefully you agree to disagree and then you move on to the next item. That is then about achieving in the best rounded way possible the maximum benefit for the Island as a whole. But on top of that, as I have said, one should be getting the right advice from within the organisation and there have been programmes put in place, for example, to promote women coming up through the ranks and to support them, for example, in sitting on boards within some of the arm's-length organisations to get that wider experience, which is about promoting their future careers and things like that. Again, it was not in place before we came in. There is always more to do but it is an improvement on where we were.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

One final question from Mr. Vieira.

13.14 Mr. P. Vieira:

What has been the most challenging part of your role in the last 4 years and what have you learned from it?

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

There have been 2 sides: the bit that has not been pleasant has been what I would call quite nasty personal politics and at the end of the day you move away from that. For me it has always been about trying to deal with the issues; not everyone has followed that role, shall we say. But putting that aside the most challenging side has obviously been dealing with COVID. Do not underestimate the number of hours that myself, Ministers, States Members, officials have put in place. In the census there is a box that said: "How many hours do you work?" and it only had 2 digits in it and at one point when I was speaking to my family we thought that was not big enough. So, in other words, we think at times I did get up to 100 hours a week. Very regularly you are doing 80 hours a week and potentially now we have probably stabilised somewhere between 60 and 70. It is a lot of time. Do not forget, that is us as politicians, and the officials that then come and support us afterwards have to come and bring that all together and implement the decisions we have made. So that has been an incredibly challenging time. But just to end on a positive note, it has been a privilege. It has been really difficult decisions. The ethical framework, it is a triage system, is a very difficult decision we had to put in place. We have never had to use it. But, on the other side, we have done hugely innovative things in Jersey, which we should be very proud of. Whether it is the co-funding side that we did to support people's jobs, whether it was the testing regime and texting regime that we put in place in conjunction with Microsoft for people coming in through the borders, whether it is the one that you all would have benefited from, which was the Spend Local card, which was the £100. I will claim a fair degree of credit on that because there were alternatives, which frankly I did not think would go very far. That was working with Mastercard. That was a global first. In fact, when I talk to people in the U.S. (United States) and also in other jurisdictions, British-Irish Council, they have been really impressed about that, really interested. In fact Arlene Foster rang me up from Northern Ireland and Northern Ireland have implemented basically the same scheme following our experience. Those are messages that show that as a really small jurisdiction we are able to move fast. We have protected Islanders and globally that is a message we can also put out. As an accountant at the end of it, we also have sound reserves left at the end of it and we have a method of paying back the COVID debt that we put in place without putting taxes up. So overall, although it has been difficult, I think genuinely that the Island is about the best possible place we could possibly have imagined when the pandemic started back in February/March 2020.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

That seems like an excellent place to end an extended question time. Thank you very much, Chief Minister. That brings questions to an end.

Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:

Thank you very much. Apologies for being remote today as well.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Apologies for keeping you longer. On behalf of Members of the Jersey Youth Assembly, I would like to thank the Chief Minister and his colleagues from the Council of Ministers for joining us this afternoon. Thank you very much. All Ministers are busy people, as we have just heard. But they are also very keen to learn and understand and I have no doubt that today they have learned a little more about the issues that are important to you. Certainly the Minister for Infrastructure had quite a grilling. Thank you. I am sure they believe, as I did, that was an excellent question time. So thank you very much indeed.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

4. Addressing hidden poverty and the high cost of living in the Island

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

We will now be moving on to Public Business. The first item for debate today is from Courtney Tham and I will ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The Assembly is asked whether it is of opinion that Jersey's Government should take action to address hidden poverty and the high cost of living in the Island.

4.1 Ms. C. Tham:

As Jersey is such a wealthy Island, should we be ashamed that there is poverty on our Island? Did you know that currently the youngest resident at the Jersey Shelter is 17 and the oldest is 83? Did you know that 1,000 children daily in Jersey are unable to access hot meals due to a lack of funds or inadequate cooking facilities? Did you know that in 2018 the Jersey Statistics Unit found approximately 19 per cent of all households find it difficult to cope financially? This figure rises in couples with children to 25 per cent, which is one in 4 families. In single-parent households this proportion goes up to 44 per cent. Jersey is a renowned Island that is well-known as a world-class financial centre, a haven for the wealthy. However, there is a hidden side to the Island that some residents may not be aware of and that is the overpriced expense of living in Jersey. Jersey was named the most expensive place to live globally and it topped the list of 139 other countries, based on the cost of goods, services and houses. Let me say that again: Jersey was named the most expensive place to live globally and it topped the list of 139 other countries.

[15:30]

Statistics show that the cost of living in Jersey is 117.11 per cent more than in the U.K. and 114 per cent more than the U.S.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you. Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]** Does any Member wish to speak?

4.1.1 Ms. E. Bailey:

One area that could help alleviate financial stress is healthcare costs. Should there be free healthcare, even though our Government has a health access scheme to help support those who qualify for low income, the £12 fee to see a doctor is still prohibitive for people with low incomes. Approximately 12,000 individuals are classified as being on income support. That is approximately 11 per cent of the population. However, 2018 statistics show that 19 per cent of all households are not coping financially. That is a shortfall for at least 8 per cent. This suggests that the threshold needs to be increased. In addition, these statistics are unlikely to accurately reflect the hidden homelessness in Jersey. Homeless people have increased demand for physical and mental health and this requires doctors and specialist interests for caring for them. Considering the size of the homeless population, it would not be a big impact financially to be supported; with the current budget for vulnerable adults being £100,000 a year and this can be increased. Another area that could be addressed is the cost of food and consumables. We are geographically and physically closer to mainland Europe but are under the control of U.K. law and tax. Following Brexit, this has led to a surge in the cost of everyday goods. Jersey could develop its own unique alliances with mainland European countries to help minimise costs that have been passed on the average consumer for consumables. As many as 1,000 children daily are unable to access a hot meal due to lack of funds or inadequate cooking facilities. In addition, maybe Jersey should become more sustainable. With improved agriculture methods and

a reinvestment in intensive organic agriculture methods, Jersey can become more self-sufficient as a lot of time and resources are wasted by exporting our own local goods and importing foreign goods.

4.1.2 Ms. C. Tham:

In conclusion, we propose increasing the income support threshold, decreasing the healthcare costs for those within that cohort, and exploring increased alliances that will promote more self-sufficiency in Jersey, both by developing alliances with France and diversifying locally.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you, and I apologise, that was one proposition there. I apologise, when Ms. Tham sat down I thought that was the end of the proposition. So now I will ask; does anyone want to second the proposition? If somebody would like to second the proposition, otherwise we cannot debate it. Just say yes. No? When a proposition is made, in order to read the proposition and debate it, you need to second it. I jumped in earlier because when Ms. Bailey stood up I thought you were moving on to make another speech. But I realise it was all part of the same speech. So now I just need somebody to say yes, they second the proposition. It can be anybody. Just say yes. Ms. Rodrigues, would you say yes? **[Seconded]** Thank you. It is just a matter of order, thank you. So now the debate is open. You have heard the proposition. Anybody is able to respond to that. You can have a view that agrees with it, a view that is against it, or you can ask questions, because Ms. Tham at the end will have to respond to the views that are brought up during the debate. Would anybody like to speak about the proposition?

4.1.3 Mr. S. Hugo:

I would like to ask what are the proposed methods for funding this?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

That is fine. Ms. Tham, I believe you will wait until the end. Is that correct, Deputy Greffier? That is normal, yes, so you have to make a little note of any questions that are asked because you will only have one chance to respond, Ms. Tham, which is at the very end. Would anybody else like to speak on this proposition?

4.1.4 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

The States of Jersey have already offered a very much subsidised travel for Islanders of the age 18 and under. The annual fee will be a small sum of £20, which I believe is a fair price to ask for. A further reduction I feel would be a waste of government resources as they could be used elsewhere in sectors where funding is truly needed.

4.1.5 Mr. P. Vieira:

From what energy source do you plan to try to use in order for Jersey to produce such a mass of energy that we can even afford to sell elsewhere? How would Jersey get the funding to both produce and sustain such a project and how would we transport that energy to the other Channel Islands? While I agree it is not good that French companies practically have a monopoly upon our energy, I do not think it would be practical for Jersey to set up an energy production facility. Needless to say this would cost millions to the Jersey Government.

4.1.6 Mr. M. Cumming:

The 5-year work rule protects those currently in poverty and on the Island, something that you claim you want to assist with. Putting a price cap on housing would essentially help, it would decrease the amount of houses available to sell. Firms would not want to sell for more than they think they would be worth and if a price cap would limit that they would not really want to offer their house.

4.1.7 Ms. L. Chambers:

Do you agree that it is a role of the Island with the means to, we ought to switch our energy supply to a green source as it is a global issue, so surely a pound of carbon removed from Jersey electricity provision is the same as a pound removed from French nuclear provision?

4.1.8 Mr. R. Arnell:

Is the revival of Jersey's domestic industries such as agriculture still viable enough to have a significant impact on poverty in the Island?

4.1.9 Ms. R. Filleul:

While I agree with Mr. Vieira's earlier point that sustainable energy in Jersey would cost a significant amount of money, I do believe that seeing as Jersey has I think the third fastest tides in the world, tidal power would make an incredible amount of sense here. The investment may be worth it, especially if we are moving towards a greener future and it would allow us to subsidise that for Islanders to reduce the amount of poverty that they are experiencing. Jersey's waters can also be used for wind turbines, which we would not even have to use facilities on Island for, we could export that energy to the mainland to be processed.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Would anybody else like to speak on this proposition, which has been interesting. The proposition is about the cost of living but you have moved very much into discussing renewable energy, which is interesting. Does anybody else wish to speak? No? In which case I call on Ms. Tham to respond.

4.1.10 Ms. C. Tham:

In response to the first question, the Government could fund for free healthcare because not many people can afford to even see a doctor, so they may not bother. If the Government can fund people in Ukraine, surely we can fund for free healthcare. For Ms. Rodrigues, would you not argue that transport to school or even appointments is necessary for young people? If Jersey can pay £95,000 for bikes, they can put more money in for healthcare, as only a budget of £100,000 a year for vulnerable adults. For the other question that I just could not answer, I am sorry, so no comment.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Believe me, that happens a lot in this Assembly.

Ms. C. Tham:

One last question that was asked, by agriculture being reinforced, yes, it can help.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

It can help. Anything about renewable energy because that did come up? Okay. With that, the end of the debate, we now bring this to the vote. So in a moment the Greffier will open the voting and you have the P, A and the C, the pour, abstention and contre. So when the voting is opened, all Members now cast their votes. If all Members have cast their votes I will ask the Greffier to close the voting, because we have somebody voting from afar. I can announce that the proposition has been adopted: 13 votes *pour* and 8 votes *contre*.

POUR: 13		CONTRE: 8		ABSTAIN: 0
Lucy Chambers		Mackenzie Cumming		
Courtney Tham		Philippe Junior Vieira		
Evie Bailey		Oliver Davidson		
Olivia Boon		Sam Hugo		
Nicole Camacho		Charles Maloney		

Iris Hickman		Oliver Elvidge		
Claudia Blackstone		Alex Laz		
Lauryn Pawsey		Tillie Beckwolden		
Bella Pesco				
Emily Rodrigues				
Ralf Arnell				
Ruby Filleul				
Beatrix Walker				

Congratulations, Ms. Tham, your proposition was adopted by the Assembly. **[Approbation]**

5. Increase opportunities for young people

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Next I will turn to Mr. Arnell to introduce his proposition and I will ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The Assembly is asked whether it is of opinion that the Government should invest in and reform systems within the Island to benefit and maintain the young population.

5.1 Mr. R. Arnell:

If you want to stay on this Island as a young person things can sometimes look pretty bleak. The Island itself can seem like a puzzle. The question, what am I to do, is a key question in the mind of a young person here. What are we to do? What are we to do if we want to change things? If you ask almost any young person on the Island, you may be surprised or even disturbed by what you will find. A deep apathy of the system. A disconnection. A lost link. Which suggests a much deeper problem. There is a lack of political opportunity in Jersey. With a 43 per cent voter turnout on elections, Jersey holds what can be said to be an uncomfortable position in the voter turnout rankings of Europe. But what can be done? A 2018 survey in the Island revealed that 84 per cent of respondents would be more likely to vote if representatives represented their interests more accurately and, most importantly, that representatives evidenced that they can make real change. Efforts have already been made to address political interest in the Island, but we must ask is this a more systemic issue. There is no quick fix. Measures to increase political education in the Island must be increased. Ministers, when elected, need to make sure they develop a close relationship with their electorate, visiting schools, creating focus groups with young people, and perhaps most importantly being transparent about what their plans are and how they are being enacted. All of these could build an Island with a more engaged population. One that can increase opportunities, both for the young and the old. I would ask you to look forward now. What are we to do in the future? Options can appear limited. At the last report, 39.5 per cent of Jersey G.F.A. (gross floor area) was to be found in the financial services sector, an impressive amount to be sure. But this perhaps brings us to our problem. What are we to do if we do not wish to work in finance? Jersey's economy is uncomfortably un-diverse. We lack many emerging industries and this reflects on our futures. Many talented individuals leave this Island every year, never to return, as we lack the facilities for nearly anything else. Jersey has the opportunity to invest in nearly any other industry. We can easily make the case for S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) - it has had its importance proven in the last 2 years - and the digital communications sector has seen great interest from young people. But truly little growth in comparison. We could be the sandbox for the future in this Island. Our economy could become stronger, options and opportunities could be opened up for the young people, and we will all be able to benefit from what is provided. The real question is:

why wait? Finally, I bring you to our last question, this time a “where”. Where are we to live? Over the last 8 years, property prices have increased by 28 per cent, a trend that seems at best unlikely to stop. Sometimes looking at these prices you wonder how anyone can live here at all. Once young people leave, they do not return, unless they are just taken in by another. Is this a stable way to keep our young population? You have to wonder how much talent and opportunity is lost every year to this problem. Many, after all, do feel a certain affinity for their Island and would be only too glad to return. But a barrier of housing prevents them. We must remember there are ways to help with this problem.

[15:45]

We can build affordable housing on unused land; many brownfield sites litter the Island and they do nothing. Reducing poverty now is crucial and it will also help for the long-term sustainability of the Island. Second homes are a rising issue. How can we allow people to have second homes when some people do not have one? A land value tax on unused land could easily help combat this issue. We cannot allow this problem to escalate, both for those who are here, but also for those in the future. If we ignore this problem now it will come back to take our attention. An investment into the youth of this Island is an investment into the future. By increasing opportunities now for those who are in Jersey and also for those who wish to remain in the future, we can grow an Island community that supports its youth and helps them thrive. If we let this bypass us we are bound to pay for it in the future. **[Approbation]**

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you. As before, is this proposition seconded? **[Seconded]** Thank you indeed. Does any Member wish to speak to the proposition?

5.1.1 Mr. S. Hugo:

With an ageing population, the Government of Jersey must do whatever it can to keep young people interested in living here in order to keep the Island alive. The lack of job diversity and employment opportunities outside the finance industry is the biggest push factor for the Jersey youth. On the Government of Jersey website the page titled: “Why choose Jersey?” it sees the finance sector advertises the reason to immigrate here, when in fact the finance sector’s domination over industries in the Island is the reason why so many young people are leaving. The Government should reform the economy in Jersey in an effort to lessen the reliance upon this sector. Many finance companies are outsourcing to developing countries and it is in the Island’s best interests, not only for the preservation of a young population, but for the preservation of an economy that is diverse and able to survive in this socioeconomic climate. We need to vary the economy to match the diverse interests of young people. One way in which this can be accomplished is by promoting investment into the Island’s other industries through the finance sector and Jersey Finance. There is such a large group of young people who leave each year in the hopes of pursuing a career in the S.T.E.M. field and who never return because of the lack of opportunities in S.T.E.M. industries on this Island. Ensuring that Islanders return after university is also important. Sometimes unwillingness to return is not the issue, but rather the impracticality of returning that young Islanders are faced with. Property prices have risen by over 28 per cent in the last 8 years, making property sometimes seem like an unreachable goal for young people and something in the future they will never own. This falls right in line with Jersey being labelled as the most expensive place to live in the world. Why would a graduate from Jersey who is struggling to make ends meet return here with their skills if the average cost of goods and services is 117 per cent higher than in the U.K. and rent 85 per cent higher? There is a real disinterest shared by many of the young people in Jersey with a lack of local political opportunities in Jersey being a major example of this. Undoubtedly, many young people are interested in politics, however this is not reflective in domestic politics with a shockingly lower voter turnout rate in Parish elections. Young people in the Island would struggle to name their elected Senators. This is a general

election this June and I believe it is in Jersey's best interests for the candidates and the Government to promote local politics. During the election, colleges and 6th forms, for example, one thing that is lacking is a general knowledge of Jersey's considerably confusing political system, notably within the Parishes and the way in which they operate. Educating the youth is an excellent way to make a long-term difference in the Island's Parish-wide engagement. Overall, the Jersey youth is being faced with a distinct lack of choice for the future of Jersey, what they want to do when they are older, where they want to live or who they want to vote for. It is this lack of choice that is driving away young people and the population of Jersey.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you, Mr. Hugo. Would anybody wish to speak? Nobody wishes to speak about opportunities for young people in the Island?

5.1.2 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Even though the house prices are rising, it does not mean that young people will not come back if it is a choice for them to come back. If I wanted to go away to university and I thought that I would be best off in Jersey, it is not a case of I cannot come back because the houses are too high because I could just stay with my parents. It is the case of there are better opportunities elsewhere. So saying that young people cannot come back because of the housing crisis is not necessarily the right thing to say because they can come back, they just choose not to.

5.1.3 Ms. I. Hickman:

You said that people are not going to return here, maybe after going off to education at university. But, as we know, Jersey has a lot of wealth here. Do you not think a lot of people's inheritance, they can live here because they then get those houses?

5.1.4 Ms. R. Filleul:

I see Ms. Rodrigues's point. I think that home ownership gives young people a certain amount of autonomy, which is very important to a lot of people. If they feel they are better able to do that in the U.K. then that will be a major contributing factor to them choosing to stay there rather than coming back to Jersey. Allowing people to get on to the property ladder younger in Jersey would definitely convince people to come back after university because it is a really important thing for a person.

5.1.5 Ms. C. Tham:

The idea of you saying that people return to Jersey is probably a bit of an over-generalisation because some people do decide to come back.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you. Would anybody else like to speak on the proposition? No? In which case I call on Mr. Arnell to respond.

5.1.6 Mr. R. Arnell:

If I may respond to the first question, I would say that some are, yes, of course, forced away looking for other opportunities, but returning here and living with your parents is not a real sustainable way of living in the Island, especially if you are 20-something, you are probably going to want your own space. I respond to the second. I would not say inheritance is a particularly stable way to ensure a young population, especially for those who may be on income support or in social housing. There will be little inheritance for them to pick up over here. I believe that through reforming Jersey systems we can attract young people back here. Of course there are some who will leave just to have a greater look at the world, but there will always be those who want to remain and there will always

be those who cannot. If we can take action now, we can ensure the long-term sustainability of this Island. **[Approbation]**

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you. With that I will ask the Greffier to open the voting and I will ask you to cast your votes. If all Members have had an opportunity to cast their votes, I will ask the Greffier to close the voting. I can announce that the proposition has been adopted: 12 votes *pour*, 8 votes *contre*.

POUR: 12	CONTRE: 8	ABSTAIN: 0
Lucy Chambers	Courtney Tham	
Mackenzie Cumming	Evie Bailey	
Philippe Junior Vieira	Olivia Boon	
Oliver Davidson	Nicole Camacho	
Claudia Blackstone	Iris Hickman	
Sam Hugo	Tillie Beckwolden	
Charles Maloney	Bella Pesco	
Ralf Arnell	Emily Rodrigues	
Oliver Elvidge		
Alex Laz		
Ruby Filleul		
Beatrix Walker		

So, congratulations, Mr. Arnell, your proposition has been adopted.

6. Party politics are not good for democracy in Jersey

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Now we move on to the next debate, which is from Ruby Filleul, who will propose party politics not being so good for democracy in Jersey. Greffier, if I can ask you to read the proposition.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The Assembly is asked whether it is of opinion that political parties in Jersey will threaten Jersey's democracy.

6.1 Ms. R. Filleul:

There are currently 4 political parties active in Jersey and the June election will be the first one where they play a leading role in Jersey politics. Before the election we need to seriously consider whether this is a good thing for Jersey. Vastly, political parties will reduce individual voices of politicians in the political system. One of the main advantages of having solely independent candidates is that they are able to bring their own unique perspectives and opinions to the States Assembly. With political parties, candidates will have to conform to the party whose ideas are closest to theirs. But it is unlikely that every member of each party will agree with every policy that party has. We can also see the negative effects of collective Ministerial responsibility in the U.K. Political parties in Jersey may result in a similar practice over here. Moreover, it will move the Island closer to the first past the post voting system like they have in the U.K., which brings with it many disadvantages, such as encouraging tactical voting, electing candidates who the majority of the voting population did not cast a vote for, and unfairly discriminating against smaller political parties, and in this case especially the independent candidates. In 2015, 63 per cent of voters cast their votes against the Conservatives and yet they still formed a Government. If political parties in Jersey lead to a first past the post system, each Government would probably be formed by a party that the majority of people did not

vote for. In fact, in the U.K. no political party has won the majority of the vote share since 1950. While many of these issues may not rise immediately, it is difficult to see a future in which party politics do not snowball and result in a political landscape similar to the U.K.'s, which is deeply flawed. Furthermore, the independent nature of Jersey politics allows politicians to quickly respond to the concerns of parishioners based on their own individual morality and form close relationships with their parishioners. Lastly, with political parties, we will inevitably see a rise in political lobbying and the addition of party whips to the political system. In fact it was only earlier this year that widespread allegations of blackmail, bribery and racism, were made against the Conservative whips. As we can see in many other democracies across the world, this often results in corruption and a lack of true representation of the electorate. The lobbying industry is already worth £1.9 billion a year in the U.K. Obviously Jersey will not see as high the number as this, but we are still a global finance hub and it is well within reason to suggest that lobbying will result in increased corruption in the Jersey political system. We therefore believe that it is important for the Assembly to consider that political parties may not be the best thing for Jersey's democracy.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you, Ms. Filleul. Would any Member wish to second the proposition? **[Seconded]** Thank you.

6.1.1 Ms. T. Beckwolden:

Building on what Ms. Filleul proposed, the idea that candidates will have to conform to a party's ideals instead of the more personal option of bringing their own unique perspectives to the table will threaten Jersey's democracy mainly due to the size of Jersey alone. Jersey has a population estimated at 107,800 in 2019 according to the States of Jersey website, which is in comparison to a political system such as that of the U.K., which has a population of 67.22 million as of 2020. It can be argued therefore that a political system involving parties is only effective for countries that have a significantly large population, whereas with a state such as Jersey with just over 100,000 people politics is much more personal and intimate. The introduction of political parties and the consequences following its introduction, such as party whips, could potentially destroy the personal aspects of Jersey politics.

6.1.2 Mr. C. Maloney:

At the moment, policies in the Jersey Parliament are passed by private coalitions between Members of Parliament and at least with a party system this will become more transparent and people will gain a better understanding of what they are getting when they vote for a certain Member. Because we do not know which Deputies always team up together to pass a certain motion. At least we will gain a better understanding of this and parties just provide better transparency in general.

6.1.3 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Jersey politics is continuously changing. For the first time we are not including Constables in the political system. Jersey parties will bring different perspectives, potentially being better for Jersey. I agree with Mr. Maloney's point, it could potentially make the political system less confusing for Islanders as it is currently extremely confusing. It would also mean that more people would vote because they could just vote for the party that they think is better and the people in that party instead of different people who have different viewpoints.

6.1.4 Mr. R. Arnell:

Would a proportional representation system not effectively represent the interests of Islanders without falling into the traps that first past the post does?

6.1.5 Mr. O. Davidson:

At the moment, voter turnout is about 46 per cent in Jersey. Do you not believe that this could increase with a party system?

[16:00]

6.1.6 Ms. L. Chambers:

Do you not believe through the introduction of political parties it reduces the power of the individual politician to make a call, even if they believe it is for the just cause?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Does any other Member wish to speak? In which case I close the debate and I ask for Ms. Filleul to respond. Sorry, you just got in before closing the debate.

6.1.7 Mr. S. Hugo:

With the introduction of the party system, is there not still the option for candidates to run individually, so they would still be able to run, just in response to Lucy's point?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

I would love to give you answers. I am not allowed to. Does any other Member wish to speak? In which case, Ms. Filleul, I call on you to respond.

6.1.8 Ms. R. Filleul:

Of course it is true that parties will mean that people will gain a better understanding of what the people are probably more likely to vote as they will be able to vote for a party's overarching views than researching each individual person's. But this shows more of a failure of political education in Jersey rather than a positive of party politics. I believe that political education in Jersey is absolutely abysmal and people do not know how the system works at all, let alone where to find out what individual candidates' manifestos are. In each individual district there are not going to be many people standing for election, so it is not an overly large number of people to have to research. The issue is people do not really know where to look and also do not have that drive to vote. This is something that should be addressed with political education. Also, parties can result in political apathy as people do not necessarily understand all of the policies that they are voting for, they are just voting for the party overall. Political parties in the U.K. work because they have this grassroots support because they have been there since the 1900s and the Conservatives since the 1850s. Jersey does not have that type of history, so it is very difficult to see political parties grafting properly on to Jersey's voting population. Finally, yes, candidates can run independently in the next election, although we have seen in many democracies around the world that parties often snowball and then become the one form of politics within that state. So they do pose a danger even if, as it stands at the moment, people can still viably run as an independent.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you, Ms. Filleul. In which case in a moment the Greffier will open the voting. The vote is now open and I ask Members to cast their votes. If all members have had a chance to vote, I will ask the Greffier to close the voting. I can announce that Ms. Filleul's proposition has been rejected: 5 votes *pour* and 15 votes *contre*. Commiserations, Ms. Filleul.

POUR: 5		CONTRE: 15		ABSTAIN: 0
Lucy Chambers		Courtney Tham		
Claudia Blackstone		Evie Bailey		
Beatrix Walker		Olivia Boon		
Ruby Filleul		Nicole Camacho		
Tillie Beckwolden		Iris Hickman		

		Bella Pesco		
		Emily Rodrigues		
		Mackenzie Cumming		
		Philippe Junior Vieira		
		Oliver Davidson		
		Sam Hugo		
		Charles Maloney		
		Ralf Arnell		
		Oliver Elvidge		
		Alex Laz		

7. Invest in facilities for young people and tackle youth crime

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Now we move on to the next item of Public Business, which is a proposition from Ms. Rodrigues, and I will ask the Greffier to read the proposition.

The Deputy Greffier of the States:

The Assembly is asked whether it is of opinion that (a) there should be more money invested in facilities for young people and (b) a mentoring and youth organisation scheme to be put in place for young people committing crimes.

7.1 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

Throughout the last year it has become more apparent that the crime levels are increasing within young people and with the lack of leisure activities we can only expect crime rates to increase exponentially. It can be seen through the antisocial behaviours of people at the Le Fregate steps during the summer where children as young as 12 years old would drink alcohol with their friends and then smash the empty bottles on the stairs, creating a hazard for other beach users. Also, throughout the year, in areas of town such as outside of McDonalds where people can be seen hanging around, throwing food, littering or being rude to both the public and the McDonalds staff. Not only is this alarming for both parents with young kids who may be scared to use these spaces in the event that something happens to their children, but also to the general public who worry for the future of Jersey and the generations to come. From both of these examples, I can easily say that we need better places for young people to go all year around. Although we have youth clubs, not every child wants to attend them. Also, sessions are predominantly held in the evening instead of after school or during the summer where young people have nowhere to go. There are plenty of sports clubs available but with the increasing cost of living parents cannot always afford for their children to attend them and also not every child likes sports. We believe that the Government should listen to what young people, perhaps those who are causing trouble, want more of, and invest money into those facilities. With improvement of youth facilities, more young people would be able to experiment with new hobbies and find their passion in life and potentially build a career out of it. The skatepark at Les Quennevais is a great idea and it is always a politician's answer to how the Government are improving facilities for young people. However, results from the Youth Justice Report show that, in 2020, 61.7 per cent of crime was committed in St. Helier, in contrast with 2.13 per cent in St. Brelade. So we need to focus our investments where the crime is more prominent. In the meantime, opening youth clubs or a social club where young people could start their own societies in town after school, could control the number of young people in St. Helier, and therefore hopefully decreasing crime levels. In addition, not having anything to do in Jersey is not the only reason that young people convert into crime. Young people are finding that there are not many people to guide them and they are lost.

Their role models such as older siblings or young adults are moving away due to university or the high housing prices and they do not have anyone to look up to. It is shown through many studies, such as the *Teen Identity Theory* by Les Parrott that teenagers search for identity through rebellion and forbidden behaviours, such as smoking. The Diana Award is an ongoing mentoring scheme run in the U.K. and Jersey, which allows a group of young people to be mentored by adults, such as police officers, for a year. Although the thought of hanging out with a police officer is not everyone's idea of fun, it allows for adults to understand why young people are the way they are and for young people to have someone to talk to and trust. We think that another mentoring scheme should be put in place for any young person who wants it, but especially for those who are committing crimes. Having someone to talk to and relate to through shared hobbies or sports could help young people to see they are not alone in their journey into adults and it could allow them to make connections and find their identity. In addition, through the use of community service-style sentencing, we could see a decrease in reoffending rates once such a crime has been committed. We think that a cadet programme should be put in place. Although this could be a lot of added pressure on to the adult volunteers, cadet forces could team up with the police force to aid them. There are also various parts of cadets that young people could take part in as we are aware that it is not the safest to give potential criminals semiautomatic rifles. Cadets is known for their discipline, aiding confidence, and teamwork, 3 vital attributes needed in society. If we could introduce a system where we could reward offenders with giving them vocational qualifications like D. of E (Duke of Edinburgh), B.T.E.C. (Business and Technology Education Council), and St. John's Ambulance in First Aid, it could potentially incentivise them to work harder or act better. We are allowing for young people to continue to commit crimes and by doing nothing future criminal records that they gain could impact them for life. Is this really the outcome that we want for Jersey's future?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you, Ms. Rodrigues. Is the proposition seconded? **[Seconded]**

7.1.1 Mr. P. Vieira:

I would like to expand on the cadet point. The cadet programme could help children from as young as 10 years old. The crime rates for young people between the ages of 10 and 15 have gone up 582 per cent from 2019 to 2020. We understand that COVID has had an impact on the number of activities available, especially during the winter months. A cadet programme could create more opportunities for activities and give young people vocational qualifications even before they sit their G.C.S.E.s (General Certificate of Secondary Education). It is obvious that young people need extra support and some form of structure. By not acting on it, the Government are failing to put the children first and consequentially failing the future of the Island.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you, Mr. Vieira. I will open this up to the debate but before I do so it is just a moment of explanation. I understand, Ms. Rodrigues, that you wish to take 2 separate votes on this proposition, so there will be 2 votes. The first one will be about should more money be invested in facilities for young people and the second will be about mentoring and youth organisations, should a cadet scheme be put into place for young people committing crimes. So that is the 2 votes we will have, but before we get to the votes would any Member wish to speak on the proposition or propositions, as the case may be?

7.1.2 Ms. C. Blackstone:

While I understand your intention of increasing organisation and discipline skills in young people through a cadet programme, in proposing a collaboration between the police force and any potential cadets that come out of your programme, are you suggesting that the solution to youth rebellion in Jersey is a military presence?

7.1.3 Ms. I. Hickman:

At the beginning of your proposal, you said a lot of things about children doing crime. That is very stereotypical. Not every child does these things and it is a small minority and it can be due to their personal life and upbringing. Like what do you have to say back to that?

7.1.4 Ms. C. Tham:

Similar to Iris, sometimes we cannot blame crime on a lack of leisure that we have in Jersey. Sometimes it stems from the primary socialisation. Also, is crime really that bad or is it just like a moral panic that the media want you to believe?

7.1.5 Ms. B. Pesco:

Some people may argue that you do not need to add more funding into youth organisations because we already have so many, and especially in summer that can be considered the biggest time for youth activities, such as we have St. James Church in town, which contributes many, many youth activities. It is not just to do with sports as well; there is music, drama, and dance as well.

7.1.6 Mr. C. Maloney:

Do you have any actual statistics to back up your claim that those who undergo the cadets programme, let us say in other countries, that reduces their reoffending rate?

7.1.7 Ms. I. Hickman:

There are not enough social workers in Jersey. Therefore, do you not think money should be spent on employing more to stop the crime rates from increasing rather than more leisure for children?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

I apologise to the Assembly. I should not have offered a second opportunity to speak to Ms. Hickman. I did not see my notes quick enough there. Apologies. Does any other Member wish to speak? As I saw Ms. Pesco does wish to speak and it would be a second chance, I will offer one more opportunity to speak.

7.1.8 Ms. B. Pesco:

You said about how some people would not want to take part in youth events, so that is why you are suggesting maybe some mentor schemes for them. Then why would people want to take part in your mentor schemes if they do not maybe find youth as appealing?

7.1.9 Ms. L. Chambers:

Do you think that it will pay to change or repurpose Fort Regent back to how it has been in previous years? I believe there was a theme park, a water park, lots of different activities for young people of all ages, not just young children, all people who enjoy sports?

7.1.10 Mr. S. Hugo:

I just wanted to clarify the potential suggestion that the cadets would have authority in somewhat policing towns?

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Does any other Member wish to speak on the proposition? This is our final debate of the day, so if you have not spoken yet, it is a good opportunity to do now. In which case I close the debate and I call on Ms. Rodrigues to respond.

7.1.11 Ms. E. Rodrigues:

We are not trying to build a military presence within our society. It is just the structure that cadets offer is more sustainable than other clubs nowadays as we are seeing they are all closing down, especially since COVID a lot of them have been closing down.

[16:15]

Cadets have been going on for numerous years and there are a few of them, so young people could choose which one they want to go to and they know that it is not going to close down. They can do it from the ages of 10 to 18 or 10 to 21, depending on the cadet force. So it could be something that they do and then enjoy and then keep doing it. We are not targeting young people in general; we are just targeting those who are committing the crimes and being antisocial. Our proposition is not for all young people. We do not want to say every young person has to join cadets or every young person has to have a mentor. Because that would be stupid. But we think that the young people who are committing crimes and are being antisocial need that extra support and by offering a mentoring support, by offering a cadet programme, and we said that the mentoring scheme would have to be mandatory as it is like another form of sentencing. Kind of like in the U.K. when you do stuff and you have to go to a therapist or a counsellor, like probation worker, it would be something like that instead, but for young people. We do not have any statistics on the cadet programme itself, however there are many articles online about some of the programmes that have worked. Personally being a cadet, I know people who have gone through this process and as an outcome it has bettered them. There is a police programme, like a prison in the U.K. that offers a cadet programme and that has been seen to better the young people in the juvenile detention centre. We would make the mentoring scheme mandatory so then young people would have to talk to someone about it. Fort Regent, in the past, would have helped us, and that is what we want to try to do. But, due to COVID, and due to the ongoing problems on the Island, it is quite hard to add loads of stuff for young people and it would have to be a continuous journey. There is a 104 per cent increase in crime among young people from 2019 to 2020 and something does have to happen soon or crime levels will get worse. As we all know, most of us anyway, there was a stabbing a couple of months ago now and even if that is a one-time event it does not mean that there will not be more and more stabbings or more and more crime, worse crime on the Island. Although we understand that cadets and talking to adults is not for everyone, we also realise that there is not help for young people after they get detained or arrested. They continue to be antisocial. Young people could realise that adults want to help if they are volunteering to be mentors and it could put additional trust into the adults, hopefully changing their mindsets and behaviours. It is obvious that young people need help and we need to put measures into place before it is too late. Lastly, I want to leave you with a quote from a young person in Jersey, quoted from the Youth Justice Report: "The more you get arrested, the less you care about the things that you were doing. It does not change your ways." We need to listen to young people and give them a safe environment to grow and progress with the help of the community instead of continually arresting them and not supporting them into being better citizens.

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

Thank you, Ms. Rodrigues. Thank you. As I mentioned at the beginning of this debate, we are going to be taking 2 votes on this proposition. The first vote will be on should there be more money invested in facilities for young people, so I will ask the Greffier to open the voting and if Members could cast their votes. Should there be more money invested in facilities for young people? All Members have cast their votes. I will ask the Greffier to close the voting. The proposition has been rejected: 8 votes pour and 12 votes contre.

POUR: 8		CONTRE: 12		ABSTAIN: 0
Ruby Filleul		Courtney Tham		
Ralf Arnell		Evie Bailey		

Lucy Chambers		Olivia Boon		
Claudia Blackstone		Nicole Camacho		
Tillie Beckwolden		Oliver Davidson		
Emily Rodrigues		Sam Hugo		
Mackenzie Cumming		Charles Maloney		
Philippe Junior Vieira		Ralf Arnell		
		Oliver Elvidge		
		Alex Laz		
		Beatrix Walker		
		Iris Hickman		

Commiserations, Ms. Rodrigues, on that one. We will now move straight on to the second vote. A mentoring and youth organisation scheme should be put in place for young people committing crimes. So that is the question, should a mentoring or youth organisation scheme be put in place for young people committing crimes? I will ask the Greffier to open the voting. If all Members could cast their votes. If all Members have cast their votes, I will ask the Greffier to close the voting. I can confirm that proposition has also been rejected: 5 votes *pour* and 15 votes *contre* on that one.

POUR: 5		CONTRE: 15		ABSTAIN: 0
Ruby Filleul		Courtney Tham		
Emily Rodrigues		Evie Bailey		
Philippe Junior Vieira		Olivia Boon		
Mackenzie Cumming		Nicole Camacho		
Claudia Blackstone		Iris Hickman		
		Bella Pesco		
		Lucy Chambers		
		Oliver Davidson		
		Charles Maloney		
		Ralf Arnell		
		Oliver Elvidge		
		Alex Laz		
		Tillie Beckwolden		
		Beatrix Walker		
		Sam Hugo		

Well done and thank you. [**Approbation**]

Deputy K.F. Morel (in the Chair):

That brings us to the close of the afternoon of debates and questions. It has been absolutely fantastic. I have learned personally it is difficult to sit in the Chair and not respond because you really do want to. But some of the debates have been absolutely superb. Some of the questions were brilliant. Some of the supplementary questions were brilliant as well. So I have been really, really impressed. I know we have a few statistics here from the Greffier: 21 people spoke, 15 Members asked 40 questions, so it shows how quickly suddenly the questions can rack up. As you saw with the Minister for Infrastructure particularly he had 7 or 8 or 9 questions thrown to him and he did fairly well. We had 33 minutes of questions without notice, that should have been 15 but we extended it a little,

during which 17 questions were posed. So the first debate; that was Ms. Tham's debate, we had 9 speeches and that took 11 minutes. The second debate, that was Ms. Arnell's debate, there were 6 speeches, 12 minutes, so slightly longer per speech on that one. Then we had Ms. Filleul's debate, which was 8 speeches in 9 minutes. Then your 2-for-one offer on the debate, with 2 votes for one speech, we had 11 speeches in 16 minutes, so that was superb. A little note here from the Greffier: "If only the States was as efficient as that." **[Laughter]** I am not quite sure what she means by that. But thank you. I have been really impressed by this. Thank you to the staff of the Greffe and to the schools and you yourselves for putting in the effort. Because I know it takes a lot of effort to do this. The Greffe has done an amazing job of organising the Order Paper, making sure that I know what I am doing, and I hope I have represented that to some extent, despite a few mistakes. So I would like to thank all the staff of the Greffe. This is the 24th Youth Assembly and it is worth noting that 2 of the current Members of the States were themselves Youth Assembly participants, Deputy Maçon, who was answering questions earlier, was one of them. So, hopefully, in due course, you may also find yourselves considering one day that it may be worth standing for election. As someone who is just finishing his first term, I can tell you now it is worth standing for election so do consider it in your futures. I want to thank the Ministers who participated today and the Chief Minister for taking time from his trip, I believe he may be in Poland, for taking his time there to answer our questions as well. Your contributions have been fantastic, some elegant answers, some elegant questions, and some really interesting subjects for debate. No, I agree, there should be no party politics in Jersey. I just wanted to add one vote for the pour on that side. It does all give me very great hope for the future. So thank you all and with that the Youth Assembly is adjourned. Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

[16:23]