

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY, 5th DECEMBER 2006

Question

Has the Migration Advisory Group considered whether the “unique identifier” that will be contained in the population register could be used for voter registration in Jersey and, if not, would the Minister request the Group to look at this possibility so that the matter can be referred to the Privileges and Procedures Committee and the Comité des Connétables for consideration?

Answer

The Population Register was envisaged primarily as a means of achieving migration objectives, being to balance economic growth with demand on resources, and enabling migration and population levels to be monitored. However, the migration policy proposals also make reference to other potential uses, as follows -

“...this proposal will have enormous potential as a basis for sharing basic, non-sensitive information, streamlining the administration of public services in Jersey and generating significant benefits and convenience for all the residents of the Island.”

This statement, however, is qualified in the policy document, which goes on to state -

“The Data Protection implications of these proposals require further detailed consideration, involving the advice of the Data Protection Registrar”

Detailed consideration of the Population Register is progressing, but it must be accepted that this is a complex issue, particularly when the register has potential for a wide range of applications. As part of this consideration, the Data Protection Commissioner’s advice is being sought.

It would be premature to comment further at this stage, other than to say, and without in anyway presuming the outcome of current policy development, that using the basic data and unique identifier within the Population Register for the purpose of voter registration is a positive and constructive suggestion, and one that could bring considerable benefits to the Island. I will certainly refer this suggestion to the Migration Advisory Group, and subject to their views, would then seek to involve the Privileges and Procedures Committee and the Comité des Connétables.

Of course, as with all proposals in relation to the Population Register, any such application would be subject to public consultation and States approval.