

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 16th NOVEMBER 2010**

Question

Will the Minister inform members of the terms of reference for the current review of Income Support and when he intends to present it to the States?

Will the review consider the actions on benefits taken by the coalition government in the UK, such as capping the accommodation component of Income Support, or introducing compulsory community work schemes for the unemployed?

Answer

A comprehensive review of the Income Support scheme commenced in July 2010 and will continue throughout 2011 examining both current operations and policy. The review is assessing the present system and proposing further enhancements to ensure that support is available to each vulnerable group specifically tailored to their particular needs whilst providing appropriate encouragement for greater independence.

The review is being undertaken with external advisors providing specialist advice as required to consider the following:

- Interaction between the Income Support system and employment
- Support for individuals with potential or actual long-term medical conditions to remain in or return to work
- The legislative framework of Income Support
- Administration of Income Support, including communications with claimants, other States departments and service providers
- Benefit levels within Income Support
- The interface between social housing provision and Income Support
- Achieving the required savings under the Comprehensive Spending Review.

The review is still in the early stages. Due to the holistic nature of the Income Support scheme it is vital that consideration is given to how any potential future changes may impact on other elements of the benefit.

The housing component of Income Support is currently capped at the lower of the actual rent paid, or the value of the fair rent, up to a maximum amount permitted.

I am watching the UK proposals with great interest and will continue monitoring them closely as they develop.