

2018.06.26

**Deputy C.S. Alves of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding increases in marriage fees:
[OQ.78/2018]**

Notwithstanding the answer given to written question 85/2018, would the Minister commit to staggering any increase in marriage fees over a period of time?

The Connétable of St. Clement (The Minister for Home Affairs):

I am sure the Deputy will be pleased to note from the written answer that I gave her this morning that the new fees are already staggered. Anyone who has already booked a wedding with the Superintendent Registrar will not pay the new fees if their wedding takes place before 31st December.

10.10.1 Deputy C.S. Alves:

Can the Minister give an indication of how much will be saved by making the Registrar self-funding and where this saving will be directed to instead?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

What the change would mean is that the Superintendent Registrar for the purpose of weddings will be self-funding. The fees were distributed this morning along with the written answer, which I think are quite reasonable and fair.

10.10.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

Does the respondent believe that there are issues with the fees, that we are moving to a user-pay system but one could argue that the buildings used and some of the services provided for are already paid for either through general taxation or through other mechanisms for the upkeep of buildings? Is it entirely appropriate that the full cost recovery is likely and also, as part of that, does he believe that there may be an unintended consequence: if the fees go up too high that it may discourage marriage?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I think that is extremely unlikely. The average cost of a wedding these days is something between £18,000 and £27,000. I think the few hundred pounds which is charged by the Superintendent Registrar pale into insignificance. It is even less - it is even less - than the Anglican Church charges. I am sure the Dean might want to make a comment ... **[Members: Oh!]** Let us be realistic, a couple having a week-day registry office wedding currently pay something between £425 and £575. They will now pay £520, so that is an increase of £95 for some; a saving of £55 for others and that just balances it all out so that it is fair to everybody. I do not think anyone can claim that the fees are excessive.

The Bailiff:

Bearing in mind the purpose of question time is not to impart information but to request it, do you wish to have a question Dean or not?

10.10.3 The Very Reverend M.R. Keirle, B.A., Dean of Jersey:

Is the Member aware that the figures in his written answer are incorrect regarding the Anglican Church? **[Members: Oh!]**

The Connétable of St. Clement:

If they are, I was not aware of that. If they are, I sincerely apologise to the Dean, and will have a correction made and distributed if that is the case.

The Bailiff:

A final supplementary?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

No, thank you.