

2020.06.02

12 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture regarding financial assistance for families (OQ.146/2020):

Further to the Minister's commitment given in the Assembly on 27th May 2020 to look into financial assistance for families, will the Minister advise what plans have been, or are to be, prepared in relation to this matter and will he provide a timeline for formulating and implementing such plans?

Senator L.J. Farnham (The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture):

At the last sitting I undertook to confirm whether parents could get assistance from the co-funded payroll scheme. I can confirm that it covers any employee in the supported sectors, whether they are working or not, as long as they are being paid by the employer. The scheme therefore means employers can be paid even if they are unable to work because they are looking after children. Additionally, the scheme allows for the self-employed who are caring for a child to claim under the scheme and also covers the costs of a nanny if employed by the household.

3.12.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I thank the Minister for his answer and can the Minister reassure the Assembly that this scheme or a scheme like it will be extended for as long as parents are at home looking after children who perhaps may be shielding because they are vulnerable?

Senator L.J. Farnham:

The Minister for Treasury and Resources has assigned an extension to this scheme until the end of August so it is guaranteed until the end of August at this stage with a further review in July. I am sure I can reassure Members on behalf of the relevant Ministers and the Council of Ministers who will be making those decisions that a great deal of consideration will be given to the needs of all households and families when we are considering how the scheme could be extended into the future. It is important that we provide the relevant support to Islanders right through and out the other side of the pandemic.