

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 21st JANUARY 2020**

Question

Given the increase, and growing volatility, in oil prices due to the developing situation in the Middle East, what measures would the Government consider introducing to assist Islanders with transport and heating costs, in particular for those on the lowest incomes?

Answer

Existing benefits provide support to low income Islanders in these areas. Pensioners receiving income support are paid a cold weather payment for each winter month. The value of the payment is automatically uprated each year in line with the change in fuel costs over the previous 12 months. These payments are also made to parents of young children and to disabled people receiving income support. Pensioners with incomes above the income support level but too low to pay income tax also receive similar payments. Specific support with transport costs is provided to income support claimants who have a disability and this element of income support is regularly uprated. All people aged over 65 and people with disabilities are entitled to free bus passes.

In the event of a sudden, significant increase in oil prices, the Government would consider any emergency actions needed to support Islanders with basic living costs.