



**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**STATES OF DELIBERATION**

**OF THE**

**ISLAND OF GUERNSEY**

**HANSARD**

**Royal Court House, Guernsey, Wednesday, 19th October 2022**

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**Law Officers**

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J. A. B. Gollop	L. C. Queripel
S. P. Haskins	P. J. Roffey
M. A. J. Helyar	H. J. R. Soulsby
N. R. Inder	A. W. Taylor
A. Kazantseva-Miller	L. S. Trott
	S. P. J. Vermeulen

**Representatives of the Island of Alderney**

Alderney Representative E. A. J. Snowdon

**The Clerk to the States of Deliberation**

S. M. D. Ross, Esq. (States' Greffier)

**Absent at the Evocation**

Deputy Y. Burford (*indisposée*); T. L. Bury (*indisposée*);  
Deputy Dudley-Owen (*relevée à 10h 40*); J. P. Le Tocq (*absent de L'Île*);  
Deputy G. A. St Pier (*absent de L'Île*);  
Alderney Representative Roberts (*relevée à 2h 40*)

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# States of Deliberation

*The States met at 9.30 a.m. in the presence of  
His Excellency Lt Gen Richard Cripwell  
Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Bailiwick of Guernsey*

[THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

## PRAYERS

*The States' Greffier*

## EVOCATION

## CONVOCATION

**The States' Greffier:** Billet d'État XVIII of 2022. To the Members of the States of the Island of Guernsey, I hereby give notice that a Meeting of the States of Deliberation will be held at the Royal Court House on Wednesday, 19th October 2022 at 9.30 a.m. to consider the items listed in this Billet d'État which have been submitted for debate.

# Billet d'État XVIII

## STATEMENTS

### General update –

### **Statement by the President of the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security**

**The Bailiff:** Good morning, Members.

The first item today is an update Statement on behalf of the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security. I invite the President, Deputy Roffey, to deliver that.

Deputy Roffey: Thank you, sir.

I welcome this opportunity to update the Assembly on the Committee *for* Employment & Social Security's progress on its key priorities and to bring Members up to speed on some new pieces of work which have just started, or are about to start.

Last year the States recognised the need for more affordable housing by commissioning £32.6 million to deliver the Affordable Housing Development Programme. Kick-started by the Housing Action Group last year, my committee has been extremely busy securing several large sites for the development of affordable housing, working closely with P&R and with our delivery partner, the Guernsey Housing Association. There are further sites in the pipeline, but regrettably I cannot reveal any further information about them today as they are in the process of sensitive commercial negotiation.

I am pleased to report that construction of some of the sites is scheduled to commence next year, starting with La Vieille Plage, which will provide 14 units of accommodation for adults with learning disabilities. The GHA was also supported to purchase the former CI Tyres site, which will be developed for urgently needed key worker accommodation. The planning applications for two of our larger sites, Fontaine Vinery and Parc Le Lacheur, are scheduled for consideration at open planning meetings in the coming months. The Guernsey Business Park site was also purchased earlier in the year, and work is now underway to submit the relevant applications to the DPA.

Between these sites, and the redevelopment of Les Genats Estate, the GHA will be able to deliver approximately 650 additional homes. While this may sound like a lot, it needs to be remembered that this is for social rental, partial ownership, key worker housing and specialist accommodation for HSC service users, and there is significant demand in all of those categories.

Sticking with the affordable housing theme, Members will recall that my committee, and P&R, are considering the possible transfer of States' Housing to the GHA, subject to more detailed work on the practicalities, including a stock survey and valuation. We were hoping to have concluded the various workstreams by now, and for this work to have informed our views on the business case for such a possible transfer, but it now looks most likely that any potential policy letter in this regard will be lodged next year.

Moving onto secondary pensions, the Assembly will debate the sursised policy letter, and the accompanying projet, next month. Last week we provided an opportunity for Members to hear from one of the architects of the equivalent policy in the UK. Helen Dean, now CEO of Nest Pensions – which is the UK equivalent of YIP, Your Island Pension – discussed the success of the UK policy and I would very like to thank Members for attending what was, I think, a really interesting event, and for their subsequent engagement and questions.

The Committee was obviously delighted that the Prevention of Discrimination (Guernsey) Ordinance, 2022 was agreed by the States last month. This was a significant milestone after more than five years of intense committee focus on this complex area of policy.

Members may be forgiven for thinking that that unanimous vote means that phase one of the Discrimination Ordinance is now completed. However, there are a number of pieces of related outstanding policy and legislative work that my committee will continue to progress ahead of the Ordinance coming into force in most respects on 1st October next year.

Sir, ESS has made great strides in securing land for affordable housing, putting the essential building blocks in place for massively enhanced Islanders' pension saving, and in outlawing discrimination.

I will now turn my attention to some new projects that Members may not have heard so much about.

I am pleased to report that phase 3 of the Supporting Occupational Health & Wellbeing (SOHWELL) programme has now got underway. This has been identified as a health recovery action under the GWP. Although still in an early stage of development, it is envisaged that the programme will have a focus on prevention and early intervention activities, to improve access to occupational health and the health and wellbeing of the population. My committee looks forward to working in partnership with the Committee for Health & Social Care to progress this important work.

Work is also getting underway on the planned review of Legal Aid, funded through the Justice Framework, and a draft Statement of Works has been prepared and is due to be considered by the Committee for Home Affairs, by P&R, and by my committee in the coming weeks.

Another area my committee plans to turn its attention to is the long-term care financing and reform to the system. In August 2020 the States agreed, in principle, that the Long-term Care Insurance Scheme should be extended to incorporate care provided at home and directed my committee and HSC to develop implementation plans for this proposal. The States at the time noted that it was estimated that this would require a 0.4% increase in contribution rates; that is on top of the increase already required to put the existing model of the scheme on a sound footing.

The States acknowledged at that time that reliance on increased contribution rates alone to ensure the financial sustainability of the Long-term Care Insurance Fund, in the context of our changing demographics, risked increasing intergenerational unfairness.

Notwithstanding, the States rejected the Committee's proposal that it be directed, along with P&R, to investigate options to moderate the increase in contributions that would otherwise be required, such as introducing a requirement, like that in Jersey, for those with very significant capital assets to be expected to contribute, say, up to 10% of those assets towards the first tranche of costs which would otherwise covered by the scheme.

Clearly, this does need to be explored in the context of our ageing population and our budgetary challenges and this is high on the Committee's agenda for 2023. I know it is not going to be popular, but it would be highly irresponsible to expand the scope of the Long-term Care Scheme to incorporate care provided at home without a clear funding plan.

Another recent decision has been to extend the suspension on income limits for existing social housing tenants for another two years until the end of 2024 in order to encourage our tenants to maximise their economic participation. And we guarantee in advance that if and when any such limits are reintroduced it will be with 'grandfather rights' which will exempt anyone who can show that they have increased their income beyond those limits during the three years when the policy was suspended.

Finally, sir, as we reach the time of year when our energy bills go up – although it is mild today – I would like to encourage anyone who is struggling financially to contact the MyGov Customer Hub team on 221000 to find out if they are eligible for financial support. Income Support is a means tested benefit that provides financial assistance to people both with and without work. If someone is already receiving Income Support and has a health condition or disability which means they have to spend extra on energy, laundry, clothing or diet, they may well qualify for an extra needs allowance of up to £20 a week. An application form is available online.

The Winter Fuel Allowance of £37.06 a week is automatically paid to all households that receive Income Support. But I want to stress that a reduced Winter Fuel Allowance may also be payable to a householder if they do not qualify for Income Support if their weekly income exceeds the benefit rates by less than the level of the Winter Fuel Allowance. So I would encourage people to test that out as well.

Income Support can also provide assistance with reasonable medical and paramedical expenses for people whose income is just above the entitlement threshold for Income Support.

A person can qualify for a 'medical-only' claim if their net household income exceeds their total household requirement rate by less than £50 a week – or, in exceptional circumstances, by less than £100 a week – providing their savings are below a fixed limit. What this does is effectively soften the Income Support means test and enable people to access essential medical and paramedical services who may otherwise struggle to afford to do so.

These excesses over requirement rates in order to qualify for medical-only benefits have remained unchanged in cash terms since 2014. ESS would very much like to increase them by £50 in order to help that really hard-to-reach group of households on modest incomes but above Income Support during this cost of living crisis. I can tell Members that a conversation in this respect is ongoing with P&R.

Finally, there is no shame in seeking financial support. It is an absolute entitlement. Sir, I am always puzzled why almost no one in Guernsey is remotely sheepish about claiming Family Allowance but some people seemingly are over Income Support.

They should not be and at this really difficult time for our community, like all other communities, I encourage people who are struggling to do just that.

**The Bailiff:** It is an opportunity now for Members to pose questions to the President on any matter within the mandate of that committee.

Deputy Inder.

**Deputy Inder:** Just briefly, sir.

In the recent debates on the requête for the Hospital field, it was Deputy Roffey who made much noise about going up in Town and using height. He has an opportunity today: Channel Island Tyres, 17 units, three or four buildings set up against a valley wall. What is he doing to deliver on what he thought was the right thing to do only a few months ago? I am not hearing much about that. Is there any chance of him getting another at least up to 40 or 50 units on that site and using that land properly?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** Of course. On behalf of HSC – and we are really just the agents here – we would like to maximise the use of that site. I can tell Deputy Inder and Members that this very week, officers from ESS and staff from GHA are meeting with the DPA to find out exactly what is possible on that site. What we do not want to do is spend a year chasing a unicorn to then be told, ‘No, this is impossible. You’re not going to have permission to do anything like that.’ So we want to optimise it but we want to be sure we are going down a track that will lead fairly speedily to the development of key worker housing, because it is needed now. So as far as I can, I will assure Deputy Inder that we will maximise the use of that site.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** I am sure I should know the answer to this already, being on the ESS board, but I am kind of intrigued: Deputy Roffey – like his predecessor, Deputy Le Clerc – has outlined the relative unsustainability of the Long-term Care Insurance Fund, especially if extended to more care in the home. Clearly, the States have decisions to make on that. For a long time, we were working with potential taxation changes that are uppermost in our mind. But if the States, for one reason or another, fail to make significant taxation changes, will we have to bring a plan B back to the States as soon as possible to ensure long-term care remains in good shape?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** It is always nice to be grilled by my own Members! *(Laughter)*

There are two parts to this: one is making the long-term care scheme in its present form sustainable. I am not allowed to answer a question on this because it is actually subject to debate in this particular Meeting of the States. However, what I was referring to in my Statement was the further burdens that we put on the scheme if we are to extend it to cover care at home. Frankly, just forever putting up contribution rates I do not think is an answer to that. Under the GWP, it has been made the top priority to revisit SLAWS, as it is known, to look at these sorts of issues, and we will be cracking on with that.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** Thank you, sir.

I thank my friend, Deputy Roffey, for his update.

Is the President able to advise the Assembly whether the GHA have any concerns with regard to the capacity of the construction industry to deliver their house-build programme within an acceptable time frame?

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.



**Deputy Roffey:** I think in common with all developers, there is a real concern about the capacity. We are going to be debating population growth later and that will perhaps even add to the requirement over the next 10 years or so to build a very large number of properties. The obvious question is: where does the workforce come from to actually do that, and where do they live when they are doing it? So yes, that is a concern; so is inflationary pressures inside construction at the moment. We cannot just lay back and do nothing and say, 'We're not going to build any affordable housing because it has got challenges.' But those challenges are there and nobody is denying them.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Soulsby.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Thank you, sir.

I was delighted to get an update from the President about the SOHWELL initiative; it meant I did not have to ask the same question that I asked six months ago. As the President will know, it is one initiative that may well reduce the need for net migration, which is something that we might be debating later.

The one thing he did not reference, though, was any time scale. I wonder whether he has got any idea about what time we may see that third phase being implemented?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** The first phase is getting underway now but it literally is on the starting blocks. It has been prioritised, as Deputy Soulsby will be well aware, under the Government Work Plan. You are always a hostage to fortune when you say exactly how long an investigation is going to take, particularly into complex issues. All I can say is, I am sure all parties will crack on with it as quickly as possible. She is quite right: if there are people in our community unable to work because of occupational health issues, that really aggravates our economic challenges, our demographic challenges and our population challenges.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

The President mentioned in his update speech that he will be working with Home Affairs in regard to Legal Aid. Can he elaborate on what that is going to look like, please?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** Yes, it is really at the starting point. A scoping document is being drawn up for a complete review of Legal Aid. That is going to be funded, it was agreed, out of the Social Justice Programme. It will be coming to ... I cannot remember if Deputy Leadbeater is on Home Affairs, I do not think he is at the moment, okay. It is going to be a root-and-branch look at Legal Aid, basically, and whether it is fit for purpose – not that we would get rid of it but whether it needs any kind of radical changes, whether it needs tweaking. I do not think I want to limit it by saying anything more than that. We want to look at the whole system and see what is best for Guernsey going forward.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

**Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

The unexpected closure of Intersurgical in the Island has highlighted for me the lack of the Island's statutory redundancy legislation. I wondered if the President would update us on what ESS could do to support that and where it fits within the mandate of ESS.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** I am really grateful for the question because I very much hear Deputy Matthews' passion on this particular subject. It is not, I have to say – because we have very limited policy resources and we have been given things like SLAWS, like Long-Term Care, like SOHWELL – near the top, but I personally feel very embarrassed that Guernsey has no statutory redundancy legislation. I know when we were talking about the anti-discrimination legislation, lots of people said, 'Why don't you just take Jersey's off the books?', so maybe we should look at doing that. But it is certainly not going to be in the next few months, it may not even be in this political term; if I have anything to do with it, it will be, but I am not a minister. Even if all of my Committee agree with me, it still does not conjure up resources from nowhere. But I agree with him in principle: it ought to be done.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dyke.

**Deputy Dyke:** Thank you, sir.

Could I ask Deputy Roffey how much of the private sector land on the Island he is planning to purchase for social housing? There seems to be an enormous amount of it which must, in the long term, depress the supply of private housing in favour of great swathes of various types of social housing. I am not sure that that is desirable or, in terms of cost-effectiveness, very good at all.

On the subject of the Tyres site, I do not see everything that comes into Development & Planning but I am not aware we have received any contact to change the planning permission of that site to a higher building; I may have missed that. Perhaps he could comment if they have been in touch with us.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** I think it was a speech more than a question but I will try and take it as two questions.

The first bit is: what percentage? As small as we can in order to provide the undoubted need for affordable housing, which is housing for people who simply cannot afford to access the private sector in an affordable way. I do not think it is a question of 'If you take a percentage for this, there's less for that.' The whole housing market is interlinked. It is houses we need across the spectrum. We are, in the current climate – we see from our waiting list a lot of people who cannot afford to simply go out and buy privately or even rent in the private market.

As far as CI Tyres, I think really the Deputy was just questioning my word. I have told the States that meetings are due to take place this week between ESS, DPA officers, and GHA to see how to maximise the use of that site.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

**Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, sir.

I thank the President for his update. Could he describe how ESS' mandate fits in with the recently-formed Housing Steering Group and perhaps what outcomes he is hoping for from his sitting on that group?

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** The Housing Steering Group is nothing more than a co-ordination vehicle. More than one Committee has housing in its mandate: ESS has only the mandate for affordable housing –

social housing, partial ownership, key worker, etc.; E&I has the more general housing mandate; and obviously, P&R tends to have a role as the banker here. It is a way of trying to co-ordinate the various work streams to make sure that we are not working against each other.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Moakes.

**Deputy Moakes:** I would like to thank the President for his update.

A very quick question: 18 months or so ago, I think I raised the point about the earnings cap that people living in social housing had to abide by. I mentioned the fact that some people were having to turn down jobs because they would take them through that ceiling. Now, I am thankful that the Committee actually suspended, I believe, that earnings cap, but I believe, unless it has changed recently, that that comes to an end at the end of this year. I would be interested to know: will that be continued for another year to ensure that people who can go into better-paid jobs are able to do so, particularly at a time of high inflation?

I would also ask whether any thought has been put into lifting the savings cap. Again, with house prices going up and up, people may not be able to afford a deposit based on the fact that there is a cap in place.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** We are not at Westminster, but I would refer the Right Hon. Member to the answer I gave some moments ago. In my Statement, I said that we had recently decided not only to continue that suspension of the income limit for another year, but for another *two years*, and to guarantee grandfather rights at the end of that time so that if somebody's income has exceeded those limits and they were reintroduced that they will not have their tenancy threatened by that. So I think we are on accord with Deputy Moakes, but maybe he wants to go read the Statement when it appears on the website.

**The Bailiff:** I was not aware that Deputy Moakes had been sworn into the Privy Council, but never mind. *(Laughter)*

Deputy Haskins.

**Deputy Haskins:** Thank you, sir.

The percentage of affordable residential housing is currently 10.3%. Does the President want to increase this? If so, by what percentage, by when, and why?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** I think that is looking at it the wrong way down the telescope. I would like to live in a nirvana where it could be zero because nobody needed special affordable housing because everybody had sufficient affordable income and would be able to go out and buy or rent in the general housing market. However, what we need to do with our mandate at ESS is make sure that there is sufficient affordable housing for the people who are not able to do that. And that has undoubtedly grown: there are people who a few years ago would have been able to reasonably house themselves in the private sector but because of what has happened with rental levels and house prices, are no longer able to do so.

So at the moment I think, yes, there is a pressure to increase the percentage to a degree.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Queripel.

**Deputy Queripel:** Sir, I was really pleased to hear Deputy Roffey say there is no shame in applying for Income Support if Islanders find themselves struggling to survive. But of course, there are Islanders who feel ashamed when they find themselves in that position. So in an attempt to encourage those Islanders to apply, would he agree with me and confirm that staff working at ESS always treat every application confidentially and they are compassionate, considerate, and 100% professional at all times?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** I thank Deputy Queripel for his comments. I have to say, they are reflected in the feedback forms that we get and consider once a quarter around the board table. What I will say is that I have gone out of my way this morning to highlight – at the beginning of winter, perhaps – some of the benefits that are available if anybody who has not thought about coming forward but is struggling might want to do so, and we are going to back that up with a publicity campaign over the weeks ahead with media releases to make absolutely sure; because while we do not want to spend more public money than we need to, we do not want people out there suffering from poverty, not able to heat or eat because they are not aware of what they are absolutely entitled to.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Fairclough.

**Deputy Fairclough:** Thank you, sir.

I thank the President for his update. Could he explain the delay until next year of the consideration of the sale of States' housing stock to the GHA?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** There are two questions, I suppose, about whether that sale is a good thing: one is whether it is a good thing for the provision of social housing, whether it will benefit tenants – both current and future – whether it will accelerate the improvement of the housing stock in that area; the other is whether it is a good deal for the taxpayer of Guernsey. That is absolutely fundamental.

While it will create a windfall of capital sum, which I am sure all of us in this Assembly would have different ideas how best to spend, the other side of the coin is, we will lose the income stream from the rent roll that comes into general revenue. Until that work has been completed by the external agencies that we have asked to do that, I do not know whether I am going to support it. It will depend on whether it is a good deal for the Guernsey taxpayer. Unfortunately, that work has taken a bit longer than we thought it would.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

**Deputy Inder:** Thank you, sir.

Picking up on your response to Deputy Trott's question earlier, would Deputy Roffey agree with me that the successful amendment which instructed Policy & Resources to create a Housing Action Plan will lay out and give an indication to the construction sector the total sum of that which Guernsey has been buying recently, an indication of the plan, how long they are going to be built, and what, effectively, the timelines are for the development of those parcels of land?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** I think that plan is being worked on by P&R. They were asked to do that by the amendment. I seem to recall the amendment was very much focused on States-owned land, and that is an important component. For instance, I would be really interested to know what the

intention is for Castel Hospital: whether it is going to be affordable housing, private housing, not housing at all.

But that is only a part of the component. I think the question that was being asked was about the broader availability of housing. To be honest, land is really important. But I think quite a lot of developers actually have land available. The question is going to be around the constraints in actually getting those built and also whether or not the recent hikes in interest rates might actually bring down potential sale prices and affect the viability of those schemes.

So I think it is a very uncertain period but all bits of the jigsaw are welcome, so I look forward to P&R coming back with the report that Deputy Inder has referred to.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** I am probably not allowed to ask this question either, but in relation to what Deputy Haskins asked earlier: would the President agree with me that in relation to the provision of affordable housing – and indeed, also, key worker housing – that in relation to the population question, if we do not expand the number of units, we run the risk of a brain drain and a shortage of younger workers on this Island?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** There is no direct correlation between wage levels and how important people are to the community. There are a number of jobs that are incredibly important to our society but are not particularly well-paid and if we do not look after those people and make sure that they have not just housing, but *good* housing, without taking 60% of their disposable income to do so, we are going to find ourselves in trouble.

When we are looking at affordable housing, as I said in my Statement, it is not just social rental; it is things like key workers. We have heard our friend Deputy Brouard say, actually, one of the key problems in recruiting and retaining staff is the availability of sufficient key worker housing. So I make no apology for being very focused on driving the affordable housing programme, which includes key worker, partial ownership and social rental.

#### **General update – Statement by the President of the Development & Planning Authority**

**The Bailiff:** The second item of business this morning is an update Statement on behalf of the Development & Planning Authority. Therefore, I invite the President of that Committee, Deputy Oliver, to deliver that Statement.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you, sir.

The DPA's last update was delivered in November 2021. Since that time, the Authority has made progress in several different areas, supporting the Government Work Plan, and is now gearing up for a focused review on the Island Development Plan, which I will explain more about in a moment.

In December 2021, we brought proposals to the States for reviewing the planning exemptions and also for the extension by a further year of the temporary exemption for the changes of visitor accommodation to housing. Since then, the detailed work of drafting the exemptions has been carried out and the new Exemptions Ordinance, covering a wide range of developments including renewable energy equipment and for community growing initiatives, will be in place before the States in February. We have also just laid Regulations for a further extension to the temporary exemption for visitor accommodation, which will assist in alleviating current problems with the supply of key worker housing in the short term.

In relation to housing, we have current major planning applications for affordable housing developments at Fontaine Vinery and Saltpans allocated housing sites. We have the outline application for Leale's Yard targeted for an open planning meeting on 16th November. In July we considered the revised application for Pointues Rocques and the plans for the redevelopment of Les Ozouets Campus for the Guernsey Institute and Sixth Form Centre. We are following up with the relevant States' Committees concerning the improvements to the transport infrastructure which were proposed and agreed as part of that scheme. We have also recently considered the application from Ronez for quarrying at Chouet.

In accordance with the States' Resolution, we will be ready to produce the Local Planning Briefs for the Harbour Action Areas at St Peter Port and St Sampson and deliver them within 18 months of when necessary strategic direction has been agreed by the States regarding the future ports infrastructure. Preliminary work has already commenced to ensure that this timescale is met.

During the past year we have produced and published development frameworks for the sites in the local centres at The Mallard and L'Aumone. Both will make a small but important contribution to the housing stock and help consolidate the local centres as focal points for the community. We are working with stakeholders to bring forward La Vrangue and other housing sites such as the Castel Hospital. Work is due to commence imminently on the Business Park Development Frameworks which will be key to bringing forward a comprehensive and effective development on the site and co-ordination of transport and infrastructure in the area.

We are also pleased to welcome the first community plan, produced by the St Peters Douzaine under enabling policies of the IDP. This followed an exemplary public consultation and on approval by the Authority will form supplementary planning guidance to be taken into account when considering development proposals for that area concerned.

Regarding biodiversity, we are continuing to apply the concept of biodiversity net gain through the planning system. We are grateful for officers working in agricultural and land management services for their expertise and assistance in preparing guidance on biodiversity enhancement in relation to the applications for the curtilage extensions, which will be published very shortly.

To complement its other work on enabling opportunities for regeneration, which have included publication of the development frameworks for Leale's yard and the Town Regeneration Areas, new exemptions and other measures designed to encourage housing in the centre, the Authority has been working on proposals for an Ordinance under section 46 of the Planning Law. This will enable the Authority to tackle eyesores in our urban centres and rural areas, thereby supporting the Government Work Plan. Examples of matters that could be addressed include derelict premises or unsightly redundant visitor accommodation establishments. Such powers would play an important part in securing revitalisation and acting as a deterrent to prevent the future creation of eyesores through dereliction and neglect. The Authority's policy letter has now been submitted following the recent positive consultation from P&R Committee, Environment & Infrastructure and the Island Douzaines.

I was very pleased to participate in the British-Irish Council Summit which was held in Guernsey in July this year. This focused on the contribution of spatial planning to Town revitalisation and building back better places and included a site visit of St Peter Port. This was a positive opportunity to meet with Ministers with responsibility for planning across the BIC administrations and to share experiences and learn best practices.

We are also involved in other areas related to the Government Work Plan, such as the Guernsey Enterprise Plan, contribution to the States' Strategic Housing Indicator workstream, involvement with the future use of Les Vardes Quarry, and looking at options for improving energy efficiency standards for our buildings. We are also producing, pursuant to the States' Resolution, a policy letter examining the use of tariffs in lieu of affordable housing, and will consider a draft policy letter in January.

On operational matters, the Authority continues to deal with a high volume of planning and building control applications in related matters such as pre-application advice. The number of planning and building control applications received rose from 1,747 and 915 respectively in 2019

to just under 2,000 and 1,000 respectively in 2021. Pro-rata figures for 2022 show a further increase, with over 1,000 building control applications estimated for this year. This, with the steady flow of Immunity Certificates relating to the purchase of property, is a testament to the Island's continuing good economic position post-COVID. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Regrettably, progress towards the digital portal for planning and building control applications was paused this year due to circumstances beyond our control, but I am pleased to say that this has now re-started and hopefully, a new system will be in place next year.

I will now turn to the most important part of this update, concerning the review of the Island Development Plan. It is proposed that this is to be a proportionate review, not touching on all areas of the Plan but focusing in on policies which have been identified through the feedback, highlighted through the monitoring, such as housing including land supply, affordable housing and GP11; employment and land supply, the policy approach to agricultural land including concern over loss of domestic curtilage; importance of protecting and increasing biodiversity; ensuring sufficient breathing space within the main centres, the policy approach to the provision of visitor accommodation, infrastructure and public amenity issues.

The importance of this focused review is not reflective simply of the need to use our resources wisely and to our best effort, but is also a function of an aim, as the Authority wishes to do, to have the review completed and reported back to the States for a decision before the end of this term of Government in 2025. Having served on the Authority for two years now, I am very aware of the difficulties that can arise when major pieces of planning policy work span different terms of Government. We saw this very starkly with the IDP itself. The Authority wishes to avoid this situation reoccurring and I hope that my colleagues will agree with both this aim and the consequent need for discipline to ensure that only the salient issues are considered as part of this review.

For completeness, the Authority is also progressing a separate but important workstream running alongside the IDP review to examine the options for streamlining the legal process to make amendments to the IDP policy.

The Authority will be considering the scope of the review in more detail before the end of this year and will be consulting on its proposals as regards this matter to be included in early 2023.

In conclusion, we remain engaged, open and transparent as a committee, with a commitment to an outreach approach. This is through, for example, the public drop-in sessions such as we held on 15th October, meetings with developers and other stakeholders to obtain feedback and the open planning meetings, of which a number are coming up. We help facilitate the GWP and the Budget, for example, through our work on the regeneration areas. I would also add that we deliberately have not increased the application fees to help support the construction industry in these inflationary times.

I would now be pleased to take any questions.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Le Tissier.

**Deputy Le Tissier:** Thank you, sir.

I would like to ask the President to tell me whether she believes the north is being overdeveloped, and if she does agree, what is she going to do about it? And if she does not agree, would she explain why she wants to shoehorn more and more buildings, flats and houses, into the northern parishes?

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you.

The north is within the Spatial Planning Policy and it is absolutely in line with that. I would say that the north does suffer a lot from ribbon development, as does the whole Island, and I think that with the north, when you drive down, the big problem with it is that if you go behind any of the

houses, there is actually quite a lot of green space, probably a lot more than in St Peter Port, if you look at the map. What we need to do as an Authority – and we need to work with Environment & Infrastructure – is actually gain the land, where the land is at the moment, for public amenity and get public access to that land.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

**Deputy Inder:** There is some convincing good news from the President's update, mainly around the planning applications. That shows we have got an economy that is working, people are willing to spend on their homes, namely their primary asset.

I think – and I am happy to stand corrected – that the DPA has a planning application target of around eight weeks. I am just wondering, given that there is clearly a desire for people to spend money on their homes, if that eight-week target is being met. If it is not, is it because of a lack of resources? What might the Committee be doing to ensure that target is sustained to allow those people with their own homes to develop their primary assets?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** The DPA during last summer lost a number of staff and we are currently trying to recruit at the moment. Building Control have recruited and we are just in the process, still, of finalising the planning applications.

I do not have the exact figures off the top of my head but I can actually send them to all the States. I think it is something like 90% of all applications are met within the eight-week process; it might have slipped slightly during the summer but we are generally still on the ball for that. The more complex ones obviously take longer.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Falla.

**Deputy Falla:** Sir, I welcome the proposed introduction of civil notices for unsightly properties; but would the President explain why derelict glasshouses are not in scope for this process? Do we have to wait for the review of the IDP before further consideration can be given to potential uses for these glasshouse sites – for example, in some cases, for much-needed housing?

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** The reason why they are not included within Section 46 is that at the moment we have Policy OC7 which actually allows development of the greenhouses for various uses. Therefore, we would not want to actually conflict both issues so that is why it has not been included.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Queripel.

**Deputy Queripel:** Sir, I am in need of clarification from the President, please, on the issue of putting pressure on owners of properties that have become derelict and unsightly. I thought that was going to be covered under the tax proposals we are going to be debating in the New Year. Are these two different initiatives?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** These, with the Budget and with Section 46, will actually work hand-in-hand and they work quite nicely together. The Budget, I believe it was only for two years for the derelict sites



so this will actually still act as a deterrent afterwards. It is just a nice piece of work that P&R and DPA, you can see actually working together.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** Thank you, sir.

I thank Deputy Oliver for her update. In the early noughties tender price inflation for public sector construction projects reached an incredible 30%-plus year-on-year, so a project expected to cost £10 million rose to nearly £13 million in a single year. Now, I am delighted to see Deputy Oliver nodding because I have a really serious concern that we may be about to repeat that problem. Does the President believe that construction inflation can be managed during a period of such high demand for housing and in the absence of a co-ordinated programme of works in a way that allows the industry to plan appropriately? I believe, sir, that Deputy Oliver is uniquely qualified within this Assembly to offer a view on that situation.

**The Bailiff:** On behalf of the Authority, yes.  
Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** I think it is two-fold, really. The DPA is not responsible for the construction's finance. If you want to actually look at that, I think you should be asking P&R that question. However, we understand as an Authority that the time it takes to do an application can have a massive bearing on costs and finance and material costs and everything. We work really closely, especially on the larger developments; I know some of them at the moment are having weekly meetings or bi-weekly meetings, and they work through all the time so they both are aware of timescales and how it is actually looking. Some things are unavoidable, like when you get an independent expert to look at something, that time then is taken out of our hands slightly and you are putting it with somebody else. But generally, I think open communication between the developer and the Authority is key.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

The President mentioned the review of the IDP. Does she agree that in order to be able to keep up with the house-building requirements of any proposed population increase, more local centres will be needed and the current ones extended, allowing more land to become available for development?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** I certainly do agree, which is why the local centres and main centres are within the review.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

**Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

Does the Authority have sufficient tools to enable derelict hotels and former vineries to convert to much-needed housing sites? As an example: is the recent application to convert the Idlerocks Hotel to a single unit the most efficient use of space?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** I am ever so sorry: I cannot answer that because it is a live application.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** I attended – at least part, because I had to go to another meeting – the excellent Guernsey Chamber of Commerce Sustainability Project Panel, of which Deputy Oliver was a star. I am interested to know how she can facilitate more use of solar panels and maybe, down the line, in relation to the high-rise buildings, green living walls so that we can have more ecological architecture which is also sustainable in energy terms.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** I recently was a panellist for the Chamber talking about sustainability and how we can actually increase it and what we can do, actual positive things about it. We are bringing the likes of solar panels, battery chargers, air source heating – that is all coming within the exemption so people will not need to apply for planning permission for that. So hopefully, it is streamlining that process to encourage people.

In regard to living walls, I would like to see nothing more than a developer come forward and say they are going to do that. However, I think a lot of that actually does not stem from our department, but actually the developers themselves and the architects saying, 'Have you thought about doing this?' It is theirs, really, to push forward. I think Government does have a part to play in it and maybe we should be doing more with our States' buildings ourselves, but it is really for developers working through costs and what the architect produces.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Fairclough.

**Deputy Fairclough:** Thank you, sir, and I thank the President for her update.

There have been a number of references to the review of the Island Development Plan. I wonder if the President could update the Assembly on the timescale and the process of reviewing the IDP, please.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** The time review, we want to bring it back to the States before the end of this term. We know what scoping we are going to have by January 2023. The process is a 15-step process to go through with various – I think there are three – lots of consultation, there is an inspector who needs to be brought over, and a number of other things. It is quite a long, drawn-out process, which is why, when we are reviewing the plan as well, we want to look at a more streamlined one so the next States, if they do want to change anything, hopefully, it will only be a three-, four-step process rather than a 15-.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

**Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, sir. I thank the President for her update. She mentioned the review of Section 46, around unsightly conditions of properties, and she went on to describe that, perhaps, redundant visitor accommodation or other properties might be reviewed and a civil notice issued. But also I have read that *land* may be considered unsightly. I would like her opinion, if possible, on what is considered 'unsightly'; because if you are a species that relies on unsightly conditions ... how it may impact them.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** We will be working through with the Law Officers themselves. The Budget itself will have to rule what is derelict, what is not, and we will be getting a similar – it will probably be the same – lawyers' guide to it.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Le Tissier.

**Deputy Le Tissier:** Thank you, sir.

I would like to ask the President if she will undertake to publish an update of analysis of houses and flats built, with permission given, by parish area, by parish population, and broken down by year. I believe that she had this information when I was a member; could she publish an updated version?

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** We publish them every quarter and we publish them annually in the AMR, the Annual Monitoring Report, so Deputy Le Tissier can get that information in there. But if he really wants, I will send it around – I will just cut and paste from the page that it is on.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

**Deputy Inder:** Just briefly, sir.

Deputy Oliver, there has been much discussion about Leale's Yard and I accept that she cannot discuss it because it is potentially a live application. All I really would like to know – and I think it is, in many of us, our view, a key or an anchor or a signature development for that portion of the Island – can she assure the Assembly that with the information that she has got in front of her, the process to a final decision is on-target for at least the end of this year?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** We have a target date of 16th November for an open planning meeting. We had had one for 17th October but unfortunately there was a discrepancy in GP11 and it is currently with an independent arbitrator. Therefore, we are reliant on them coming back and as soon as they come back, it can go to open planning meeting.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Haskins.

**Deputy Haskins:** Thank you.

May I ask the President how or if Section 46 will affect any glasshouse sites, seeing as though they seem to be the most likely sites for development?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** I think I have already just answered that question, sir. They will not be included because we currently have a policy, OC7, which deals with the greenhouses; therefore, we would not want to be conflicting the plan and a new piece of law.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Blin.

**Deputy Blin:** Thank you, sir.

Could I ask the President: since the change to the agricultural and domestic curtilage regulations, have we seen a decrease in applications?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you.

We have seen a 34% decrease in applications for the change of use from agricultural land to domestic so I think that steps that we put in *[inaudible]* is actually working quite well.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Falla.

**Deputy Falla:** Thank you, sir.

In the light of Deputy Oliver's previous answer, does she believe that OC7 is adequate for dealing with derelict glass, given that there does not appear to be much happening in that area?

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** We have had a number of applications to do with OC7, the change of glasshouses. I cannot tell the Deputy ... off the top of my head – *Falla*, that is it! – actually how many we have had and if it is still working. I know that if they are not, it is something that is going to be considered within the review because it is the land management.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

**Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, sir.

The President would be aware that building control regulations in the UK, Part L, were updated in June this year. For Members who are not aware, Part L is the conservation of fuel and power. Will Guernsey be likely to be following suit in the update? And will they also be taking part in updating Part O, for overheating of buildings, and Part S, which is the electric recharging of vehicles regulations?

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you, sir.

We would have wanted these regulations to actually come in much sooner, but unfortunately, given the loss of people within Building Control, our Head of Building Control actually had to start going out, doing site meetings for the building regulations. So that work got pushed back but it will be coming back to the Committee in, I believe it is, the first quarter of next year; but as soon as it can get done, it will. But we cannot just stop going out to do building controls because we need a piece of regulation in.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Taylor.

**Deputy Taylor:** Thank you, sir.

In response to a question from Deputy Inder relating to Leale's Yard, Deputy Oliver indicated that the Authority have a date of November for an open planning application. Would she agree with me that the Authority only recently agreed at a committee meeting that we would not be publishing the meeting dates for open planning meetings as it places undue pressure on the Authority to come to a conclusion when it might not necessarily have all the information available to it and further delays would just cause problems in the public?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Yes, that is why I said it was a *target date*, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** Unfortunately, I was busy Saturday so I did miss the Development & Planning open day, but I was not the only one, as some environmental groups did. One group, the Pollinator Project Guernsey, said they would like to raise the need for harm prevention measures; better protection of wildlife; setting limits on lights; avoiding plastic, glass, and hard surfacing; introducing Bee Bricks; mandating wildflower lawns, rather than single-grass, native tree, and hedging. As part of the next stage of both Island Development Plan thinking and work generally, are the DPA ready to come back with ideas on strengthening habitats and also preventing light pollution?

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you, sir.

We have a piece of work at the moment which is looking at when somebody wants to extend their curtilage from agricultural land; we are producing a document. I believe Pollinate Guernsey have been working with us, Societe Guernsey, and also the Agricultural Land Management ... Services – something like that. They have been working really closely with us. We are developing this document that will actually pretty much say a lot of the things that we want people to be looking at when thinking of converting agricultural land into anything else. We also require a biodiversity net gain.

Some of the things that are there it is difficult to actually do, because there is a piece of work that Environment & Infrastructure need to do with what is called 'mapping', to actually map what is in an area at that time. With everything going on, we just work to the best of our ability at the moment.

**The Bailiff:** The 20 minutes is just about up anyway, nobody else is rising.  
We have got no questions for Question Time – hurrah!  
We will move on to the next matter.

## APPOINTMENT LAID BEFORE THE STATES

### Appointment of Chairman of the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority

**The States' Greffier:** Yes, sir.

Appointment laid before the States: the Appointment of Chairman of the Guernsey Competition Regulatory Authority is laid before the States.

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, we simply note that this appointment to the Authority has been laid at this meeting; there is no motion to do anything in respect of that appointment today.

**Procedural –  
Order of Business**

**The Bailiff:** Before, Greffier, you call the next matter, Deputy de Sausmarez, you wish to move a motion, I understand?

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Yes, please, sir. In light of some amendments that have very recently been lodged, I would like to request a reorder of business, if that is okay, to allow the Committee to consider the impact and its stance on those amendments, given it is a highly technical area.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Where do you suggest that we put it to at this stage?

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** I had not got that far, sir. *(Laughter)* At least after the next item, thank you. But I would like it to be considered in this States' Meeting because of course, we have already had to change the date on the Commencement Ordinance and I would prefer that it was not delayed by very much.

**The Bailiff:** Would you be happy if – for the time being, at least – the motion is that this next item, the Environmental Pollution (Guernsey) Law, 2004 Part VI Water Pollution Supplementary Policy Letter, is put behind the two items of legislation so that it comes after Article 4, which is The Economic and Financial Crime Bureau and Financial Intelligence Unit? In other words, before population management – just to see if you are ready?

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Yes, sir, if we could take that as an interim approach, if you would not mind. I just do not know how long it is going to take for us to assess the impact as a Committee. We obviously have not had a chance to meet. If we can at least – if it could be after lunch, that would be good. *(Laughter)*

**The Bailiff:** In the first instance, Members of the States, I am going to put to you a motion that this item of business be deferred to the end of the current items of legislation, recognising that it might still be too early for the Committee. This is a procedural motion. Those in favour; those against.

*Members voted Pour.*

**The Bailiff:** I will declare that carried.  
Greffier.

**COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**2. Low Value Debt Relief –  
Propositions carried**

*Article 2*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

*Whether, after consideration of the policy letter titled 'Low Value Debt Relief' dated 15th August, 2022, they are of the opinion:-*

- 1. To agree to the implementation of Low Value Debt Relief Orders, as described in the Policy Letter titled "Low Value Debt Relief" dated 15th August 2022, of the Committee for Economic Development.*
- 2. To direct the preparation of such legislation as may be necessary to give effect to the above decision.*

**The States' Greffier:** Article 2, the Committee for Economic Development – Low Value Debt Relief.

**The Bailiff:** I invite the President of the Committee, Deputy Inder, to open debate.

**Deputy Inder:** Sir, in this instance, Deputy Moakes, who is our financial lead, will be opening on this.

**The Bailiff:** Okay, it would be helpful if I were forewarned of these matters, but Deputy Moakes.

**Deputy Inder:** I beg your pardon, sir.

**Deputy Moakes:** Thank you, sir.

First of all, I would like to thank Deputies who contacted me prior to the debate with questions and for the support shown for this policy letter. The proposals in this policy letter seek to make low-value debt relief (LVDR) available in Guernsey to some of the most financially insecure members of our community.

The proposals arise against a background of consultation by the Committee for Economic Development on both corporate and personal insolvency law reform. Following an initial focus on corporate insolvency law reform, an industry working group was established in 2020 to make recommendations to the Committee regarding personal insolvency reform and LVDR. This was identified as the first potential insolvency law reform work stream.

In a relatively small number of cases, personal debt can become unmanageable, where an individual of limited financial means has no reasonable prospect of repaying their debts. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently, the cost of living crisis, have both highlighted the potential of global factors to contribute to unmanageable debt.

Citizens Advice Guernsey has been represented on the working group and has advised the Committee that an LVDR regime would address the greatest need in our community in this regard. Similar forms of debt relief are already available in the United Kingdom and the Committee believes that LVDR should be available in Guernsey too.

The details of the proposal are set out very clearly in the policy letter and I do not propose to repeat them in full in this speech. I would, however, highlight that there would be a legibility criteria ensuring that LVDR is only available to Guernsey residents of very limited financial means with relatively low levels of eligible debt who have acted in good faith. An individual will *not* be eligible to apply for LVDR if they have been the subject of LVDR or other personal insolvency proceedings in the previous five years. An application for an LVDR order will be made to a Jurat of the Royal Court. It is proposed that there will be a private register of LVDR orders and there will be certain

restrictions on individuals for the duration of an order, including their ability to obtain credit in excess of £500 or to act as a director of a company without the lead of the Royal Court.

These proposals, if approved by the States, will provide an opportunity for some of the most financially insecure members of our community to move on from unmanageable debts and I commend them to this Assembly.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

**Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

During the election, candidates had the opportunity to meet with a number of local groups and gain an understanding of current issues facing the Island. It was during one of these meetings with the Citizens Advice Bureau that I was reminded that Guernsey effectively has no modern Laws for personal bankruptcy or equivalents such as individual voluntary agreements or debt relief orders. Effectively, if someone found themselves in debt and could not pay, there is no way out. The lack of this seems almost Dickensian, harking back to the days when debtors who could not pay faced prison. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) It was startling to realise that Guernsey is almost alone amongst Western democratic countries in lacking this.

I committed to myself, then, that I would support efforts to introduce legislation to remedy this gap. In fact, I had two items at the top of my list of missing items: the other one is the Island's shocking lack of statutory redundancy pay, which unfortunately has not progressed. However, progress has been made on insolvency.

Early in the political term, I congratulated Deputy Helyar on his announcement that he also saw this as a priority for action, and very kindly, he offered that I could provide some political representation on the working group set up to progress the introduction of new legislation. Under the Chairmanship of Jamie Toynton, now Jurat Toynton, a leading Island expert and practitioner in insolvency, the group thoroughly investigated the options available. Comparisons were made with existing laws in the UK and Jersey. Very broad consultation with lenders and the views of local professionals in a wide variety of fields were taken into account. I can safely say that no stone has been left unturned. This is the first part of the process which introduces debt relief orders for debts under £30,000.

Local lenders have in practice made an excellent job of working around the lack of legislation within their own procedures. One question that emerged stands out: for this legislation, there are likely to be low numbers of people affected and given the excellent efforts made by local lenders to work with people who get into financial difficulty, is it really worthwhile to draft legislation for just a handful of cases?

I would say 'yes' for two reasons. Firstly, the recent turmoil in the British economy and especially the sharp rise in Bank of England base rates brings into sharp relief the uncertainty that lies ahead. Since the mid-1990s, we have had more than two decades of relatively benign conditions with low interest rates and reasonable growth in GDP; there is no guarantee that will continue and no guarantee that all lenders will always act responsibly.

Secondly – and I see it as almost more fundamentally – providing a legal mechanism for debt relief can have a positive impact on the mental health of anyone concerned about the future who feel they may become trapped in debt that they cannot escape. This can have an even broader impact on the handful of individuals who may actually seek to make use of debt relief orders, as many people can find themselves concerned about what the future might bring in difficult times. Even if it never gets used, some peace of mind can be provided by knowing that a way out exists as a last resort.

Debt relief orders do offer a way out for those who have found themselves in difficulty with debt they cannot escape through no fault of their own. With a new start, people can return to a productive life and be of benefit to the economy once more. This is why nearly all free-market societies provide some mechanism for a second chance.



For these reasons, I commend the policy letter to the Assembly.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dudley-Owen, is it your wish to be relevée?

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Yes, please, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Thank you very much.  
Deputy Aldwell.

**Deputy Aldwell:** Thank you, sir.

I would like to have wholeheartedly supported this low value debt relief policy letter but I am unable to do so. We have this piece of legislation before us which will take the debt from the borrower and give it back to the lender or the tradesman or to a business to cover debt of up to £30,000. I am sure we will hear from Deputy Helyar as the Chair of the Citizens Advice Bureau for first-hand accounts of people struggling to pay debts and the stress that it will be causing them through no fault of their own.

We are told in 2.1.7 of the policy letter that:

... local lenders did not consider that the introduction of legislation to provide low value debt relief was necessary.

– as of course, they were –

... unlikely to pursue debt where it was apparent [people were] unable to pay and ... they would be likely to write [it] off.

Speaking to local lending companies, they tell me they pride themselves in doing all they can to keep in contact with borrowers and sit down with them if there is a change in situation and deal with the problem. The Citizens Advice Bureau tell us in 2.1.2 that they act as intermediaries and they 'negotiate a repayment plan, manageable by the debtor and acceptable to the creditor'. There are several areas which concern me: 3.2.2.1(b). To be eligible, you have to 'be at least 18' – 18 is very young and there is always a great potential to work to pay off that debt; (c) 'have been a Guernsey resident for two' – two years to run up £30,000 in debt is a very short time; (d) 'not have any insolvency for the last five years' – any previous insolvency is not good. Could this lead to a pattern of not taking responsibility? In Jersey, the limit is £20,000 but the route has never been used.

The Citizens Advice Bureau have 18 potential clients, we are told, who have £30,000 in debt which could potentially be written off. That would be £540,000 for lenders, who have lent in good faith, to not receive back. If Members of the Assembly agree that this would be the best way forward, a solution could be for those to set up a fund between themselves and contribute, covering the debt, rather than volunteering businesses.

I have two female friends who are close to me who have been in a situation where they were left with debts by their husbands. One had been used as a guarantor for business loans and the debt took her 10 years to pay off and another had lost the family home and had debts to pay because of her husband's gambling. Both of them said that it was a struggle. They also had children to raise. They felt that they could walk tall and hold their heads up high and both said if they had the opportunity to wipe the debts off – would they have taken it? 'No' was the reply.

I believe that people should take responsibility for their own debts and even if they are only able to pay a small amount a week, it teaches borrowers to be responsible. We have heard that mediation is set up to help deal with debt and we have also heard that lenders do not pursue if there is no chance of recovering the funds. I do not think we should punish lenders who have lent in good faith. There are mechanisms in place to help those in debt.

I will not be voting for this policy letter. Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** I suppose I thought this was relatively non-controversial. I am not on Economic Development; I am, of course, on Legislation Select with Deputy Matthews and agree, I think, with his speech. In a lot of the financial legislation and other legislation we get, including some today, there is always the clause in it that one thing that kicks you out of even being a recognised chartered accountant in the future is if you have been bankrupt. It could be that the bankruptcy might last a lifetime, so there are issues.

Deputy Matthews refers to the debtors' prisons that luminaries like Charles Dickens' father suffered. I think the problem was not just that you might have been sent to prison for a culpable felony or misdemeanour; it was that you were put in prison until you were set free, until your debts were paid. I have a vision that if I was not paying my debts, all my colleagues would have to help me – except I would have to resign if I was in that sort of debt anyway, under the Rules. So I could be there for a long time, that is the concern! (*Laughter*)

Actually, I do find interesting Deputy Aldwell's speech because I had some of the same thoughts. The policy letter is quite suave in a way, like Deputy Moakes' speech, in that it kind of glosses over who takes on the debt. On superficial reading, you think it is the States who would magic up a sum of money or a pool or almost a captive to cover it. But it is not, it is the person who has given the loan who pays the price. If the debtor successfully applies for a Low Value Debt Relief Order (LVDRO), as I understand it – Deputy Helyar or others could correct me; Deputy Moakes – it is the debtor who then does not get the money back. For some Guernsey businesses, whether they are money-lenders or not, that could make it difficult.

I think I did support, with a slight degree of reluctance, the earlier Economic Development reform of credit financing, but we have already heard from one or two other Members that maybe that was not the best thing to do in the interests of that particular sector. There is always a balance between protecting the vulnerable and those who want a new start and business. And perhaps, in the old days, Guernsey was on the harsh side, which is why we have still got [*inaudible*]. There was very much a culture that you did not encourage people to go into debt and that people who got themselves into debt really were, in some ways, sinners.

I will come onto one or two more specific points. As I say – let me think – if I leant money for coffees to Deputy Inder and he did not pay me back and he applied for the thing, then I would lose it. But it is more likely the other way around! It just worries me, that.

Now, paragraph 2.13 gives us some of the evidence that the Citizens Advice Bureau Guernsey advised Economic Development in 2019 – pre-pandemic, of course – that there were 104 clients of the Financial Restitution Negotiation Service. I might not have been an official client of that, but over the years, they have sometimes helped me when I have been moving mortgages or whatever.

Those 104 service users collectively had £4.34 million of unaffordable debt, comprising of £2.7 million of secured debt and £1.64 million of unsecured debt ...

Sometimes, clients can pay debt off over time and it is sometimes the creditors who are a little bit impatient on occasion. That is where I think the CAB is useful. But I am puzzled by that. The mystery is that £2.7 million of that is secured. Now, if it is secured on property or other assets – although I would not necessarily advise for early liquidation, because it is probably in the interests of all parties for people to tame their method of living or their home – surely, in the long term, that debt should and could be repayable because there are assets to cover it. The average debt, £42,000 per client, is probably historic now.

Now, they noticed the issues were 'poor budgeting' – budgeting skills, we could all do with – at 24%, 'reduced income'; but other issues were 'relationship breakdown', 'reduced income', and 'job loss', 'health issues'. Some of those may be overcome-able over time. I like the point – because I think it has been under-stressed in the past, even by Health & Social Care and Social Security – that there is a risk of mental health problems, a '3-fold increased risk', through debt and:

There is also a strong negative relationship with suicide and drug and alcohol abuse.

– with the relationship between debt and health. I think we need to bear that in mind to balance against the wise points Deputy Aldwell made.

Clearly, we have not had too much detail on what various lenders thought; we just had a general summation in 2.17 and some were not too impressed. I know some are extremely responsible, even more so than they were perhaps 10, 15 years ago.

Another – I will not say ‘negative point’ but it is certainly a – point to consider is 2.19, Economic Development:

... acknowledges that there is a possibility that the introduction of [these orders] in Guernsey may reduce the willingness of some lenders to offer credit in some cases ... [they] already assess risk ... there will always be a small number of debtors from whom recovery is unlikely ...

But of course, the downside of that will be frustration for customers, reduction of the size of the economy, and possibly, reduction in spending power, to a degree. I sometimes deplore these adverts you see just before Christmas: ‘You too could have a Happy Christmas: borrow some money! Blah, blah, blah’ But they are part of the economy at that level.

Now, the policy letter flags up Désastre and Saisie, which clearly in need, as Deputy Matthews said, of greater reform and I hope we will see further reform.

On the points Deputy Aldwell mentioned, 3.2.2.1, it is certainly true that it would be unacceptable for an 18-year-old who had recently arrived on the Island to have £30,000 in debt in this, but it actually says ‘have *no more than* £30,000 qualifying debt’. Rather than a target, it is a maximum upper limit, so hopefully, anyone within that category will be less. And the 18 years old I suppose is to alleviate the stress on the teenager; but of course, hopefully, the Jurat in the process will consider that somebody at the start of their career may have a lot longer to repay and should be given the opportunity and the incentives to repay, rather than just quickly go for an LVDRO. What is not clear from this, too, is whether if you have an LVDRO issue, it will have a negative impact on your career prospects or eligibility for certain professional business occupations, because it may well do so.

Five thousand in value of assets is fair enough, perhaps for those who need urgent expenditure for family members or for funerals – although actually, it is higher, come to think of it, than what we allow for grants for people who need medical assistance. I suppose the reason we allow them to keep a motor vehicle is so they can continue to work or do essential jobs. More controversial – as I know from my own experience, really – is how you define ‘disposable income of no more than £100 a month’ because that includes ‘reasonable household expenses’ and what I spend on things I am sure other Deputies would consider unreasonable; who knows?

There are certainly a lot of questions on this and there is no obvious information in the policy letter on how many LVDROs there will be. But in principle, at this stage, subject to legislation, I support it but would welcome more answers to some of these questions, both updating it post-pandemic – because the information we are relying on is 2019-based – and also, responding to Deputy Aldwell’s questions about the impact upon lenders and not encouraging consumers of any age – but perhaps especially, younger ones – to build up debts irresponsibly and ending up owing money for coffees like – well, *not* like me, but ... (*Laughter*)

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Taylor.

**Deputy Taylor:** Thank you, sir.

I was not expecting much debate on this but I do want to get up just to respond to some of the points that Deputy Aldwell has put – I agree with the concerns that she has raised – but to put on record my reasoning to put those aside and eventually support the proposals here.

I think that her concerns around the businesses swallowing the losses that they might face – in my mind, I have justified this: if those losses are already lost, if you are trying to take money from someone who has no money, it is not going to go anywhere anyway. First of all, I would question how much the business ... if it is lost, how much more are they losing. Once it is gone, it is gone.

The second very short point is that the losses should – and maybe they definitely will be after this is approved – be calculated into the profits and into the rates that are offered. If you are lending money to someone – (**A Member:** Up the rates.) yes, maybe up the rates. And it has to cover – this applies to most businesses: if you are buying in food, you have to account that a certain amount of that food might end up on the floor. Cups that end up getting broken; for every coffee you sell, you might have to give one away for free. I hope you would not but you might.

The final point is that debt is often sold. You can have a situation where people are owing lots of money and they become an asset on someone's books and that just seems wrong to me.

So I accept there might be a few holes in here that might need a bit of polishing but I am broadly supportive. Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

**Deputy Inder:** Only briefly, sir. I would just like to thank Deputy Moakes for fronting this policy letter and the help we have had from the Citizens Advice Bureau on this path.

Deputy Matthews has done a fine speech and he has saved me bumbling my way through it so I thank him for actually sitting down and writing something. And very good speech from Deputy Aldwell as well.

The difficulty is that when you look around the Assembly – and I have said this before and I am probably going to say it again and I will say it the day after that – we are not entirely reflective of society, we just simply are not. In the main – *in the main*, I am saying – we have got to a certain point in our lives, we do not have the complications of all elements of our society. And in 2.14 – just moving on to what Deputy Gollop said, and I will go back to Deputy Aldwell – he broke down the (a) through to (f) of the:

CAG further reported that it assessed causes of debt amongst those clients as follows:

- (a) Poor budgeting ...;
- (b) Reduced income ...;
- (c) Relationship breakdown ...;
- (d) Job loss ...;
- (e) Health issues ...; and
- (f) Family problems ...

They are not in isolation; some people have got all six or seven of those problems and that is just a factor of the more complicated society that we live in today. I have never owned a credit card in my life, never had one in my life. I come from that world of basically, 'If you haven't got it, you either save for it – if you haven't got it, you don't spend it.' But that does not make me better than anyone else; it is just a fundamental principle that I go through in my life. I do not look down on someone because someone has fallen into the trap of buying a credit card and whacking something out on their £20,000 Primark credit card or whatever they get nowadays; the world is just different, it is entirely different. Our people are far more exposed to being sold debt; I think it is something Deputy Taylor touched on as well.

In the main – well, not 'in the main' at all – of course, I am going to fully support it, but I would be very careful with people looking at the world that we live in through their own lenses because the world just ain't like that.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

**Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, sir.

Deputy Gollop, somewhat, I follow his thinking, for once, in that I too would like some sort of clarification from Deputy Moakes or Economic Development. I do thank them for the engagement that they gave me a while ago when I did have some questions, but if possible, I would like to put

them on record. I was not very clear when I read the policy letter about the debt and how it would be repaid or funded and I took it, perhaps, that the States of Guernsey were going to create a fund and that it would be repaid out of that. But now, thanks to their engagement, I understand that it is the creditor that is due to write that off. So perhaps, if Deputy Moakes could confirm that, that would be very useful.

I would also like to understand – and I thank them for the list that they have put together in 3.2.3.1 – about what type of debt could be included in the low value debt repayment order. I note that, of course, the secured debts come first, so we are basically talking about unsecured debts. I am wondering how Economic Development seeks to protect contractors, etc., or people who will be offering services to Islanders other than the £10,000 petty debt limit. Perhaps, again, if he could address that in his summing up, that might be useful.

Of course, I also welcome the limits put in place in 3.2.2.1 but question (f) in that, the reasonable household limit. My understanding is that the Low Value Debt Relief Order is an individual's responsibility and an individual's claim, but then you are limiting the ability to claim, effectively, on the £100 *household* limit. Of course, a household is, on occasion, more than one person, so I would like to understand how the household's and the individual's limitations effectively come together and how the LVDRO would take account of that.

Those are all the points that I would like to make on that. I thank Deputy Moakes and Economic Development for raising this important legislation and I will be supporting it.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dudley-Owen.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you, sir.

I was not going to speak in this debate but a few things that people have said have brought me to my feet. I would like to congratulate Deputy Aldwell on her speech because I think she has raised some really interesting and relevant points which have actually lead to us having a discussion about this really important issue which, quite frankly, I think before that would have probably gone through on the nod. But I think this has started to fuel some thought process, certainly in my mind, around things that fellow Deputies have been saying this morning.

One thing that I would like to remind Deputies of, especially given Deputy Taylor has talked about purchasing debt, is that actually the subprime mortgage crisis which lead to the 2008 financial crisis was as a result of purchasing other people's debt. So it is not really very good for the economy to be entering into those types of financial transactions.

Debt is a massive cost to the economy and I think that we have got to be extremely interested in it, which is why in Education we are often pushing about financial awareness and managing your finances properly. It is clear that obviously, still, people do not.

I do not think that the President of the Committee for Economic Development assisted the cause for the particular policy letter when he was talking about people running up bills of £20,000 on their Primark account. That is not really what I think we are talking about here. We are talking about an age-old human problem which happens to be the perfect storm of events coming together where people may not be financially savvy: they may be poorly skilled or relationships break down – two incomes are better than one, etc.; bad luck of job loss – what has happened recently with Intersurgical; health issues which no one can help; and family problems which come about. Those are age-old problems; they are not specific to the age that we live in.

It is clear that there is some catching-up to do in Guernsey but I do think that it is incumbent on us in this Chamber. It is not about looking at this through our so-called 'privilege lenses' that we sit in; we have been asked to represent the community, and that is every single person in the community. There is a broad spectrum of voters out there. And it is for us to be able to ask questions as well because we are not just representing those who find themselves in financial hardship; we are also representing those who are at the sharp end of that who actually do not get paid the money that they have worked hard in their business to actually earn. I have experienced this with a family

business where people have not paid what they owe and it is really hard for those people who are small business-owners and who are not reclaiming the money that they have worked hard to actually earn.

So I think we need to think long and hard about this. I am really very grateful to Deputy Gollop as well for bringing up some issues around this, making us think twice about just nodding this particular piece of work through.

I also would take issue with what Deputy Gollop said – not too much but I think, let's be careful of making correlations between hardship in life, mental health issues and then the risk of suicide. Let's start building a more resilient, confident society where we do not have to keep on pulling out those figures as a trope for why we should be constantly voting this through or voting that through just on the basis of guilt that it might lead to the most unfortunate of circumstances, because in most cases, it does not. Let's not guilt-trip ourselves into making these important decisions; let's use other arguments which actually have got more currency.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

I will be supporting this. Deputy Aldwell had concerns about the creditors taking on these liabilities and I can understand that. But creditors can challenge an LVDRO. In 3.4.1:

The Committee considers that it would be appropriate for creditors to have an opportunity to object to the making of [an order] or the inclusion of that creditor's debt [on the order], on receiving notice of the debtor's application for a LVDRO.

It also says in 3.4.2:

A creditor should also have an ability to apply for a LVDRO to be revoked, or amended, if the debtor's circumstances have changed within the moratorium period, such that he or she is no longer unable to pay his or her debts.

I think that is protection there, as far as I can see.

This is not about helping those who for whatever reason *do not want to* pay their debts; it is for helping those who for whatever reason *cannot* pay their debts, and there is a difference. I think Deputy Taylor picked up on it: if somebody has got no money and a creditor is going to go after them for that money, there is no money to get, there is no money. It is chasing round in circles. It costs money trying to recover that money.

So I think this is a really important piece of work and I congratulate Economic Development. Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dyke.

**Deputy Dyke:** Thank you, sir.

I am in two minds about this legislation and, honestly, I cannot decide how I am going to vote. Obviously, it is a well-meaning piece of legislation. Where you have got a person who has got himself, for either good or bad reasons, into the position where he cannot pay his or her debts, one does have a difficulty to deal with.

Deputy Aldwell made some points about how this tends to work out in practice at the moment, and in particular, the point that a creditor is unlikely to go after a debtor whom he knows has no money because there is simply no point: you pay legal fees for no particularly good reason. Those are all valid concerns.

The other concern I have is that effectively, one is, in some cases, going to be burden-sharing. You have got someone in some difficulty. He may owe money to tradesmen – for example, a small building company that has done work on his house. He may owe money to a credit company that has advanced credit to buy a car or something like that. When you do that burden-sharing,

obviously, someone that does not really deserve to be hit with a loss is then hit with it, which will then, I think, have some effect – it is impossible to say how much – on the market out there in terms of the availability of credit. I do not know how much effect this is going to have but it must have some effect on the credit companies. Will they withdraw some credit lines? Will they up their interest rates somewhat?

How are tradesmen going to handle this? Typically, in my experience, builders will do work on your house and you pay them when they finish. Are they now going to start thinking, 'I'd better ask for money up front'? So you have helped in one way, but longer-term, have you made the availability of credit for people who need it and can manage it less available than it would have been before? You will have other persons who need to borrow money for whatever reason now paying somewhat more for it than they would have done before or possibly not being able to obtain it if tradespeople and credit companies change their rules. So it is actually a rather difficult piece of legislation to decide how to vote on so I will listen to everyone else.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Helyar.

**Deputy Helyar:** Thank you, sir.

I was not going to speak, but since my name has been mentioned in despatches a couple of times, I thought I should stand.

I am the Director of Citizens Advice and the Chairman of that but I am not a Deputy in that capacity so I do not consider that I have a special interest.

There is a key point to this legislation that has been missed so far, and it is a legal point. The process for recovering large, individual, small debts is called *Désastre*. The process would be that somebody would come to either the Royal Court or the Magistrate's Court and if there were a number of different judgments against them, then one of the debtors could ask the Sheriff or ask the Court for a declaration of *Désastre* and then those things would all be put together and effectively, a Jurat sits over the process of it. The process following that would be that the person who owes the money has to give an inventory of what they own. The Sheriff is not allowed to seize that person's tools of trade; for example, if someone is a plasterer, you cannot take their equipment away from them because they need to be able to continue to provide for their families and so on.

The problem with that process, legally, once you reach the end of it, is that it does not discharge the legal requirement to pay the debt. That is all this is about. This is about allowing there to become a process for people who have for whatever reason, whether it be they be profligate in their borrowing or they have just fallen on hard times or they have become ill – this enables them to discharge those debts so that they can have a clean record, because if you do not have a clean debt record, you cannot have a bank account; you will not be able to get a flat because you cannot pay a deposit; you will not be able to have a telephone because you do not have an address to hold it from, you do not have an account to pay the money from, so you are on pay-as-you-go; you may not have access to the internet because you have no data.

This creates a whole layer of poverty which most of us never see. I am not happy to say but I do get to see it because of the position that I hold in a local charity. There are a number of people who are continuously bouncing along the bottom (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) because they cannot discharge themselves from that debt position.

This has really been a travesty since the 1930s; this legislation has not been updated. The previous legislation was in French. The process of going through *Renonciation* of debts is extremely complicated, it is a Royal Court process, it requires the need for an advocate. None of this ever gets done because it is far too expensive and too complex to do it; in fact, I think Advocate Strappini was perhaps the last one to bring a *Renonciation* application in this very room. It is there for a very good reason. And I do not feel sorry for the lenders: they should not be lending money to people who cannot repay it – (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) simple as that. It is their risk they are taking. We have

insurance products that people can take out with their borrowing which will cover the lenders' losses if people cannot repay it for some accident of whether they lose their jobs and so on.

I commend this piece of legislation to the Assembly. It is very long in the waiting and I hope it is unanimously approved.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** I am going to speak very briefly because I think it is important for us not to be soft on these issues in regard to the lenders. We all know you cannot get blood from a stone. But importantly, bad debts are an occupational hazard of any lender. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) They are considered, they are factored into the business model. What this will do is tighten the criteria. It will make it less likely for people who have little chance of being able to sustain repayments to get the credit in the first place. Now, I accept that brings certain problems, but it is infinitely more desirable than the problems that occur when people get themselves into debts that are unsustainable.

But my main reason for rising was to pick up on a point that Deputy Dudley-Owen mentioned and one that was going through my thoughts throughout this debate. On a larger scale, the behaviours of certain people in the United States, providing mortgages to people who had no income and very little chance of repaying that debt unless there had been significant increases in the capital value of the asset that the mortgage was put against and then wrapping them up into these collateralised debt obligations that were traded off-balance sheet, they were the catalyst for the misery that was the Global Financial Crisis. And there is not that much of a leap towards the irresponsible lending at the bottom end of the market to the irresponsible lending that nearly brought the world economy to its knees.

So I have no difficulty whatsoever in supporting this States' Report.

**The Bailiff:** I turn back to Deputy Moakes to reply to the debate, then, please.

**Deputy Moakes:** Thank you, sir.

I have made some notes here. There were really very few questions. I think a number of people mentioned the same things.

I would like to, first of all, cover off a point raised by Deputy Gabriel: who takes the hit? It is the lender. It is not the States; it is the lender. The lender lent the money, the person cannot pay the money back, the lender therefore takes the hit.

I would like to now move on to the points raised by Deputy Aldwell, which were very well-put, but I disagree. If you actually read 2.1.7, what it actually says there is 'The Committee notes that during informal consultation, *some* local lenders' – Deputy Aldwell, I think, said 'local lenders' – 'did not consider that the introduction of legislation ... was necessary.' It was not '*all* lenders'; it was:

... *some* local lenders did not consider that the introduction of legislation to provide low value debt relief was necessary.

And the reason for that was:

This was on the basis that lenders would be unlikely to pursue debt where it was apparent that an individual was unable to pay ...

So there is already a recognition that it is the lenders that take the hit. The good, reputable lenders probably have no problem with this whatsoever. Yes?

the Committee [however] believes that the introduction of legislation is necessary to provide certainty and to protect individuals from less compassionate lenders.

So all of the people who have stood up and supported this legislation have all, to a degree, said these types of things.



The eligibility criteria is incredibly strict, as a number of people have already pointed out. This does not apply to very many people whatsoever. It is designed to help the people in the most desperate situations you can imagine, and that is all. Creditors can challenge, and I thank Deputy Leadbeater for his analysis, which he had obviously researched very carefully. Creditors can challenge this. And if debtors' circumstances change during the moratorium period, which is for a year, then all this could disappear anyway. Now, that probably will not happen in most cases, but it could, so it is worth bearing in mind.

I think that is probably all of the questions wrapped up into a short burst. I would like to thank everybody who stood up and supported this legislation. And as I said previously, I commend it to the Assembly.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, there are two Propositions; they are inter-related so I am going to put both of them to you together.

I invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Carried – Pour 31, Contre 1, Ne vote pas 2, Absent 5, Did not vote 1

5

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>
Deputy Blin	Deputy Aldwell	Deputy Queripel	Deputy Burford	Deputy Falla
Deputy Brouard		Alderney Rep. Snowdon	Deputy Bury	
Deputy Cameron			Deputy Le Tocq	
Deputy de Lisle			Alderney Rep. Roberts	
Deputy de Sausmarez			Deputy St Pier	
Deputy Dudley-Owen				
Deputy Dyke				
Deputy Fairclough				
Deputy Ferbrache				
Deputy Gabriel				
Deputy Gollop				
Deputy Haskins				
Deputy Helyar				
Deputy Inder				
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller				
Deputy Leadbeater				
Deputy Le Tissier				
Deputy Mahoney				
Deputy Matthews				
Deputy McKenna				
Deputy Meerveld				
Deputy Moakes				
Deputy Murray				
Deputy Oliver				
Deputy Parkinson				
Deputy Prow				
Deputy Roffey				
Deputy Soulsby				
Deputy Taylor				
Deputy Trott				
Deputy Vermeulen				

**The Bailiff:** In respect of both Propositions, there voted Pour 31 Members, 1 Member voted against, there were 2 abstentions, there was 1 Member who was present but did not vote, 5 Members are absent still; therefore, I declare both Propositions duly carried.

**LEGISLATION LAID BEFORE THE STATES**

**The Income Tax (Independent Taxation) (Commencement and Transitional Provisions) Regulations, 2022**

**The States' Greffier:** The following legislation is laid before the States: number 61 of 2022 – The Income Tax (Independent Taxation) (Commencement and Transitional Provisions) Regulations, 2022.

**The Bailiff:** Once again, Members of the States, we simply note that those Regulations have been laid at this Meeting. There has been no motion to annul those Regulations.

**COMMITTEE FOR HOME AFFAIRS**

**3. The Forfeiture of Money etc. in Civil Proceedings  
(Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2022, approved**

*Article 3*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

*Whether they are of the opinion to approve the draft Ordinance entitled "The Forfeiture of Money, etc. in Civil Proceedings (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2022", and to direct that the same shall have effect as an Ordinance of the States.*

**The States' Greffier:** Article 3, Committee for Home Affairs – The Forfeiture of Money etc. in Civil Proceedings (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2022.

**The Bailiff:** I invite the President of the Committee for Home Affairs, Deputy Prow, to open debate – and if there is no debate, then at least to move the amendment.

*Amendment*

*At the end of the proposition, insert ", subject to the amendment indicated below:-*

*In clause 1(2) of the draft Ordinance*

- (a) immediately after 'After section 12', insert ', under the heading 'Forfeiture',*
- (b) in section 12A(3)(c) as inserted into the Forfeiture of Money, etc. in Civil Proceedings (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2007 ("the Law"), for 'subsections' substitute 'paragraph', and*
- (c) in section 12B(2)(b) as inserted into the Law, immediately before '(a)(i)' insert 'paragraph'.*

**Deputy Prow:** Thank you, Mr Bailiff.

Sir, in September, the States approved recommendations to put a number of amendments to the legal framework for dealing with financial crime. These include an amendment to The Forfeiture of Money etc. in Civil Proceedings (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2007, which the Assembly is asked to approve today.

This amendment shifts the burden of proof in civil forfeiture cases requiring a person claiming ownership of a property to demonstrate its lawful origin. In addition, it introduces a summary forfeiture procedure and protection against liability. This approach will also be taken in the project which is currently being drafted to implement the new civil forfeiture regime following the decision of the States in November 2021 to repeal and replace the 2007 Law with a revised regime.

This work demonstrates our commitment to work at pace with colleagues at the Law Officers' chambers to expedite necessary legislative amendments to ensure they are enforced in good time for the evaluation by Moneyval.

Sir, I therefore ask the States to approve this legislation. Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Do you want to move the amendment, Deputy Prow?

**Deputy Prow:** Yes, please, sir. Please may I move an amendment which deals with three typographical errors in the draft Ordinance. I apologise to you, sir, and I apologise to the Assembly that these errors were not spotted.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen, do you formally second that amendment?

**Deputy Vermeulen:** I do, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Is there any debate at all on the amendment or can I put the amendment to a vote without more ado?

In that case, Greffier, will you open the voting, please, in respect of this amendment to the draft Ordinance proposed by Deputy Prow and seconded by Deputy Vermeulen?

*There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 33, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 1, Absent 5, Did not vote 1

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	ABSENT	DID NOT VOTE
Deputy Aldwell	None	Deputy Roffey	Deputy Burford	Deputy Falla
Deputy Blin			Deputy Bury	
Deputy Brouard			Deputy Le Tocq	
Deputy Cameron			Alderney Rep. Roberts	
Deputy de Lisle			Deputy St Pier	
Deputy de Sausmarez				
Deputy Dudley-Owen				
Deputy Dyke				
Deputy Fairclough				
Deputy Ferbrache				
Deputy Gabriel				
Deputy Gollop				
Deputy Haskins				
Deputy Helyar				
Deputy Inder				
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller				
Deputy Leadbeater				
Deputy Le Tissier				
Deputy Mahoney				
Deputy Matthews				
Deputy McKenna				
Deputy Meerveld				
Deputy Moakes				
Deputy Murray				
Deputy Oliver				
Deputy Parkinson				
Deputy Prow				
Deputy Queripel				
Alderney Rep. Snowdon				
Deputy Soulsby				
Deputy Taylor				
Deputy Trott				
Deputy Vermeulen				

**The Bailiff:** In respect of the amendment proposed by Deputy Prow and seconded by Deputy Vermeulen which makes these changes to the draft Ordinance, there voted in favour 33 Members, 1 abstention, 1 Member is marked present but did not vote, and there are the 5 Members who are absent; accordingly, I will declare the amendment duly carried.

Deputy Gollop on the draft Ordinance as amended.

**Deputy Gollop:** It is now amended.

It is a bit like *Groundhog Day* because I think I made the same speech last time. Anyway, it will be tedious repetition. We put this at great length to the Legislation Select Committee – the Legislation *Panel* of Scrutiny, rather – but the fact that we had one or two amendments shows the urgency and speed at which work for Moneyval and all of this is going on.

Of course, I think the important thing to put on the record is: not only is this extremely important to assist Moneyval and introduce a new forfeiture procedure for what are commonly described as ‘no consent’ cases, where the Law Enforcement authorities have refused to consent to a transaction, but from a legal, jurisprudential point of view, we recognise the usefulness of this for the foreseeable future.

But it does reverse the burden of proof. The burden of proof in standard civil forfeiture applications is reversed so that where the Court has previously frozen assets that are suspected to be linked to criminality and His Majesty’s Procureur then applies for a forfeiture order, the Court must make a forfeiture order unless satisfied, on the balance of probability, that the assets are not linked to criminality. So the moral here is very much that anyone who finds themselves in this situation needs to have an audit trail and a processed paper record log that any assets that they have are legitimately bought and acquired.

But it is, perhaps, from our civil law, a red letter day and shows how importantly we take the ruggedness and robustness of our jurisdiction. And I do support it, but I think there may come a point when we have to balance the freedom of the individuals against the powers of the state. But on this occasion, I think we are moving in the right direction.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

**Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

I will, of course, be supporting this legislation. I think, as many have mentioned, it is necessary for the Moneyval evaluation so it is something that we have to do.

I just wanted to go a bit beyond that. It was something that came up on the Legislation Review Panel. We did look at it, we did look at what the potential implications are for reversing the burden of proof. I just wanted to briefly say that as well as us doing this because it is necessary for Moneyval and we do not want to be grey-listed, this type of legislation is the sort of thing that prevents the worst type of organised criminals and dictators and all sorts of dark money from around the world (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) being left in accounts that then cannot be recovered for criminal procedures. Would we want that to be lurking around in the depths of our finance system? Of course we would not.

I think we should all fully support this legislation not just because we need it for Moneyval, but because it is the right thing to do. Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** I do not see anyone else rising.

I will turn back to the President, Deputy Prow, to reply to that short debate, please.

**Deputy Prow:** Thank you, sir.

Yes, I thank both Deputy Gollop and Deputy Matthews, whom I think are supporting the introduction of this legislation.

I just want to stress this is talking about the civil process. This is about establishing to a court that the money is legitimate and it does not the criminal process.

I completely endorse everything Deputy Matthews said. He is absolutely right: Moneyval are only evaluating this jurisdiction against the FATF recommendations and I think it is absolutely right and proper that this jurisdiction does all it can to combat money laundering (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and the financing of terrorism and corruption. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.)

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, there is a single Proposition: whether you are minded to approve this draft Ordinance as it has now been amended by the amendment that you have just approved.

I invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

*There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 34, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Absent 5, Did not vote 1

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	ABSENT	DID NOT VOTE
Deputy Aldwell	None	None	Deputy Burford	Deputy Falla
Deputy Blin			Deputy Bury	
Deputy Brouard			Deputy Le Tocq	
Deputy Cameron			Alderney Rep. Roberts	
Deputy de Lisle			Deputy St Pier	
Deputy de Sausmarez				
Deputy Dudley-Owen				
Deputy Dyke				
Deputy Fairclough				
Deputy Ferbrache				
Deputy Gabriel				
Deputy Gollop				
Deputy Haskins				
Deputy Helyar				
Deputy Inder				
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller				
Deputy Leadbeater				
Deputy Le Tissier				
Deputy Mahoney				
Deputy Matthews				
Deputy McKenna				
Deputy Meerveld				
Deputy Moakes				
Deputy Murray				
Deputy Oliver				
Deputy Parkinson				
Deputy Prow				
Deputy Queripel				
Deputy Roffey				
Alderney Rep. Snowdon				
Deputy Soulsby				
Deputy Taylor				
Deputy Trott				
Deputy Vermeulen				

**The Bailiff:** In respect of this Proposition, there voted in favour 34 Members, 1 Member is marked present but did not vote, there are still the 5 same absences of Members; therefore, I declare the Proposition duly carried.

**COMMITTEE FOR HOME AFFAIRS**

**4. The Economic and Financial Crime Bureau and  
Financial Intelligence Unit (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2022  
(Commencement) Ordinance, 2022, approved**

*Article 4*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

*Whether they are of the opinion to approve the draft Ordinance entitled "The Economic and Financial Crime Bureau and Financial Intelligence Unit (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2022 (Commencement) Ordinance, 2022", and to direct that the same shall have effect as an Ordinance of the States.*

**The States' Greffier:** Article 4, Committee for Home Affairs – The Economic and Financial Crime Bureau and Financial Intelligence Unit (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2022 (Commencement) Ordinance, 2022.

**The Bailiff:** Is there any need to open at all, Deputy Prow? No?  
Any debate on this commencement Ordinance? Yes, Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** Yes, very briefly, sir, because you will understand why I am rising in a short while. Sometimes one can ask a question that is repetitive but is not tedious and I think this is one such example. Is the President of Home Affairs and his Committee able to confirm that with reference to the impending Moneyval assessment, the crucial Economic & Financial Crime Bureau are not only *adequately*, but *properly*, resourced and fit-for-purpose?

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** As no one else is rising, I will ask the President to reply, if he so wishes, to that debate.

**Deputy Prow:** Thank you, sir.

In relation to the only question posed by the Assembly from Deputy Trott, he draws attention to the Moneyval review. And he is right: the evaluation will be looking at the Economic & Financial Crime Bureau which we now have, which the States has approved, and this legislation this day will give it statutory footing. The work they do is very much a part of the evaluation. It is vital that we set up the EFCB and the Financial Intelligence Unit on a statutory basis.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, once again, there is a single Proposition: whether you are minded to approve this draft commencement Ordinance or not.

I invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

*There was a recorded vote.*

Carried – Pour 32, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Absent 5, Did not vote 3

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>
Deputy Aldwell	None	None	Deputy Burford	Deputy Cameron
Deputy Blin			Deputy Bury	Deputy Falla
Deputy Brouard			Deputy Le Tocq	Deputy Moakes
Deputy de Lisle			Alderney Rep. Roberts	
Deputy de Sausmarez			Deputy St Pier	
Deputy Dudley-Owen				
Deputy Dyke				

Deputy Fairclough  
Deputy Ferbrache  
Deputy Gabriel  
Deputy Gollop  
Deputy Haskins  
Deputy Helyar  
Deputy Inder  
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller  
Deputy Leadbeater  
Deputy Le Tissier  
Deputy Mahoney  
Deputy Matthews  
Deputy McKenna  
Deputy Meerveld  
Deputy Murray  
Deputy Oliver  
Deputy Parkinson  
Deputy Prow  
Deputy Queripel  
Deputy Roffey  
Alderney Rep. Snowdon  
Deputy Soulsby  
Deputy Taylor  
Deputy Trott  
Deputy Vermeulen

**The Bailiff:** On this occasion, the voting was as follows: there voted in favour 32 Members, 3 Members who did not participate in the vote, still the same 5 who are absent; therefore, I declare the Proposition duly carried.

Deputy de Sausmarez, are we ready to go or would you like some more time?

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Sir, if we are to take this item next, can I request a brief recess for the Committee to have a chance to discuss it? *(Interjection)*

**The Bailiff:** Is it your preference, Deputy de Sausmarez, that the States should have a motion put to them that they have a recess so that the Committee could meet, or would you simply prefer to put it behind the next item, which I imagine will take longer than an hour or two?

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Maybe that is probably the best option. If Members are minded to request that we deal with this item next, maybe we could do it so that if the motion for a recess is rejected, we could move on to the next – no, it does not really work like that, does it?

**The Bailiff:** Let me put a motion to Members of the States – *au voix* because it is a procedural motion – that rather than trying to push the Committee into being able to respond to the late amendments that have been submitted, we simply put this behind the next item (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and it will still be reached before the end of this Meeting; I am confident in that.

That is the proposition, Members: are you minded simply to defer this – Article 1, which is the Environmental Pollution, Water Pollution Supplementary Policy Letter matter – beyond population management, if I can use that loose term? Those in favour; and those against.

*Members voted Pour.*

**The Bailiff:** I will declare that motion duly carried.

We will move into a short debate on the Population & Immigration Policy Review. *(Laughter)*

**COMMITTEE FOR HOME AFFAIRS**

**5. Population & Immigration Policy Review –  
Debate commenced**

*Article 5*

*The States are asked to decide:-*

*Whether, after consideration of the Policy Letter entitled 'Population & Immigration Policy Review', dated 5th September 2022 they are of the opinion:-*

1. *1. To note the objective findings of the Review, and the evidence presented in sections 5 and 6 of this Policy Letter, that suggests an average net migration level of +300 per year over the next thirty years is required to sustain the Island's workforce at its 2020 level, and to agree that the economic competitiveness of the Island should be supported through the strategic population objective that: 'The States of Guernsey will assume, for the purpose of planning future infrastructure and service provision, that net migration will average up to +300 per year over the next thirty years. This assumption will support the capacity of the Island's workforce so that it remains a desirable and competitive jurisdiction, and will ensure that the Island can meet the needs of the economy with the necessary housing and infrastructure.'*
2. *To agree that the strategic population objective shall be reviewed by the Committee for Home Affairs, in consultation with stakeholder committees, no later than December 31st, 2027.*
3. *To rescind Resolutions 3 and 4 of Billet d'État XXIV of 2015 ('Maintaining Guernsey's Working Population') and its accompanying strategic population objective.*
4. *To direct the Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure to include, in the work on market interventions that will be made by the States of Guernsey in respect of housing, specific reference to enabling the delivery of general housing units and stock, as well as social and key worker housing units and stock before the end of 2023.*
5. *To note that the Human Capital Development Plan will be published by Q2 2023, and to direct the Committee for Economic Development and the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture to ensure that the Plan supports the relevant aspects and recommendations of this Review.*
6. *To direct the Committee for Employment & Social Security to consider any recommendations in the areas of workforce participation where contributions and benefits may assist future outcomes, and to return to the States with any proposals before the end of 2023.*
7. *To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to lead a review of the options for any bespoke arrangements that ensure those who are new to a community, and who may only be staying and working in that community for a fixed period rather than on a permanent basis, access public services in a fair and transparent way, and to report its conclusions and make any recommendations to the States before the end of 2023.*
8. *To direct the Policy & Resources Committee to review whether any greater flexibility or benefits in kind could be applied to finance sector roles that are directly linked to Guernsey meeting its economic substance requirements, in order to include any new arrangements as part of the 2024 Budget Report.*
9. *To note the Committee for Home Affairs' intention to make any necessary policy changes to the Employment Permit Policy and the Immigration Work Permit Policy in line with the steps set out in paragraph 7.6 of this Policy Letter.*
10. *To agree that the Population Management (Guernsey) Law, 2016, shall be amended to provide that:*
  - a) *Short-Term Employment Permits may continue to be granted for a period of up to one year and may be renewed upon expiry by the Administrator until the holder reaches up to three years' consecutive residency;*



- b) *An individual who has previously lived in Guernsey on the basis of a Short-Term Employment Permit for up to three consecutive years may be issued with a further Short-Term Employment Permit provided they have taken a 'recognised break in residency', as defined under the Law; and*
- c) *Medium-Term Employment Permits are removed from the Law.*
- 11. *To note the intention of the Committee for Home Affairs to develop and implement an improved end-to-end service through the merging, where appropriate, of Population Management and Immigration at the policy and operational level, and to further note that there may be consequential amendments to the Immigration Rules and resource requirements, including a minor capital funding request, to facilitate this and Proposition 10.*
- 12. *To note that one of the principal duties of government is to maintain the safety and security of the Island and its residents, and the ongoing roles and coordination of the Population Management and Immigration regimes in contributing to this duty will be continually reviewed by the Committee for Home Affairs.*
- 13. *To direct the Committee for Home Affairs to conduct a review of the routes to Permanent Residency under Sections 3 and 6 of the Population Management (Guernsey) Law, 2016, particularly in respect of so-called 'birth-right privilege', and to report its conclusions and make any recommendations to the States before the end of the current political term.*
- 14. *To note that the Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure is in the process of developing proposals for an Open Market inscriptions policy and the Open Market Transfer Register, and will seek to make any necessary recommendations to the States before the end of 2023.*
- 15. *To agree that Section 8 of the Population Management (Guernsey) Law, 2016, should be amended to make clear that Open Market householders may accommodate Seasonal Employment Permit holders.*
- 16. *To note that the Committee for Home Affairs considers it essential for the Population Management regime to apply as a level playing field for all business entities across Guernsey and Herm, and that it intends to consider, following the necessary consultation and engagement, how Herm can be included within the Population Management (Guernsey) Law, 2016, reporting back to the States by the end of 2023.*
- 17. *To rescind Resolution 2 of Billet d'État VII of 2017 ('The Population Management (Guernsey) Law, 2016 (Commencement) Ordinance, 2017').*
- 18. *To direct the preparation of such legislation as may be necessary to give effect to the above decisions.*

**The States' Greffier:** Article 5, Committee for Home Affairs – Population & Immigration Policy Review.

**The Bailiff:** I am going to invite the President of the Committee, Deputy Prow, to open the debate.

Deputy Prow, please.

**Deputy Prow:** Thank you, Mr Bailiff.

Sir, it is an honour to be presenting to this Assembly this day the outcomes of an important review which the reviewers believe are, on several fronts, essential to be debated. I believe to date this will be one of the most important conversations that we will have in this Assembly this term. It contains much data and evidence from many different directions and deals with complex and technical issues posing challenges for Government.

I think it might be helpful to start by outlining what I need to say in opening this debate. I must attempt to explain what the policy letter is and what it is not. Then I hope to give top-line conclusions of the review and summarise the Propositions in terms of how they begin a roadmap

to face these challenges, some of which are urgent and overdue in terms of Government decision-making. So, sir, I hope Members are sitting comfortably.

In explaining the overarching findings, I shall be referring to the steering group in order to provide the necessary context. This background is essential in that the Committee for Home Affairs, instructed by the Government Work Plan, was quick to identify a review of the population and immigration policy as one of its strategic priorities for this political term. The Assembly endorsed its importance by identifying it as a top-10 action of the Government Work Plan. I note such a review was promised last term but was never delivered. The review was therefore led on a cross-Committee basis, particularly given the salience of population as an issue that cuts across so many Committee mandates.

At the beginning of the review, the cross-Committee steering group was assembled which was well-represented by senior politicians across the States, including the Presidents of five Principal Committees and the Policy & Resources Committee. It also had the benefit of two non-States' Committee members with huge experience of how our Island functions outside of Government. **(A Member: Hear, hear.)** But not only that, a team of subject matter experts were put together from across those Committees who assembled and analysed a vast amount of data and have presented it in an understandable format for the benefit of the Members of this Assembly and the public. Furthermore, extensive stakeholder engagement was conducted, including targeted consultations, meeting with special interest groups, a survey and presentations, which are all outlined in Section 4 of the report.

This Assembly, rightly, craves the available evidence when considering policy decisions and in the case of this review, I believe we have quality research upon which we are now able to set high-level States' policy on immigration and population management. **(A Member: Hear, hear.)** Sir, I sincerely thank all the very able States' Members for their input and challenge and I must give high praise to all the officers for their hard work, which in my view, was of an outstanding quality.

Furthermore, please may I draw the Assembly's attention to Appendix 6, which attaches all the letters received on the policy letter from those Committees involved. I thank them for their submissions and I hope Members have found that useful. So, sir, we can see it was an in-house job: 'No external consultants were used in the making of this product.'

Sir, it is without doubt that the size of the population sits at the core of the Island's strategic direction and the States' strategic population policy affects every Government initiative in some form. This policy letter and its outcomes have never lost sight of that fact; indeed, the key interdependencies with population – housing, infrastructure, skills, public services, and the environment, to name but a few – were discussed by the steering group at length. However, much of the substance of that work, while inter-related, ultimately falls outside the scope of the review. This policy letter was therefore centred on understanding the Island's population and workforce requirements to sustain the economy in the long term. Extensive research was conducted on the basis of in-house data and outcomes of the review, including the strategic population objective, which was squarely based upon and guided by the research.

It is consequently worth stating that the policy letter being debated by the States today is not a half-baked scheme, nor is it conjecture; rather, it is the outcome of rigorous and in-depth research in relation to the Island's long-term sustainability, which I believe requires the States to make uncomfortable but necessary decisions.

Sir, the Island is facing unprecedented challenges in both the short and long term. Employers and businesses in Guernsey are struggling to attract workers to the Island. Now, as worldwide recruitment challenges take hold, not only does this affects our excellent and well-regulated finance sector, which acts as the engine of our economy, but also in the case of sectors traditionally identified as critical – for example, health and social care, law enforcement, and education – all staff in those supporting industries that keep our Island moving – such as bus drivers, shop workers and cleaners. At the same time, there is irrefutable evidence that as an Island, our population is steadily getting older and as a consequence, our workforce is forecast to decline if no action is taken. This leaves some tough decisions ahead in respect of how to sustain the Island's economy and finance

this to address this problem in the long term. The Island is not alone in facing these problems. However, this is only likely to increase global competition for skilled workers in the medium to long term.

In the local context, these recruitment challenges are compounded by a lack of available housing and infrastructure, both limiting the Island's ability to keep the workers that we currently have and attract the workers that we need. It is in this context of these global and local challenges that the review was conducted. I believe that we, the States, must face up and confront these challenges head on and I hope the outcomes of this review can represent the beginning of that task.

Sir, I have described these challenges as a wake-up call for this Assembly and I stand by that. We need to sit up and smell the coffee. The policy letter makes for very uncomfortable reading. Please, do not shoot the messenger. It poses political conundrums but the Propositions seek to provide a way forward, to unravel and address them. Propositions 1 to 3 set out our high-level objectives and 4 to 8 deal with the delivery of general housing units in stock, the Human Capital Development Plan, workforce participation, access to public services, economic substance requirements. Sir, it is all in there. Propositions 9 to 16 deal with the policy changes that are absolutely vital and summarises in Section 7.6 how to enable delivery of these objectives.

So, sir, what is this review *not* about? It is neither setting a population target nor cap. I will repeat that, sir: *it is neither setting a population target, nor a cap*. Neither will any population objective become a silver bullet. The assumption of 300 is not intended to be an objective for the States; rather, it is intended to provide the framework through which the States needs to consider its population over the next 30 years to sustain the Island's economy. This is so important for Members to understand.

Through the review, the steering group was presented with stark forecasting data on the decline of our workforce over the next 30 years as the ageing demographic takes effect. Members will have noted the conclusion of that work, which suggests that an average level of 300 net migration needs to be achieved per year over the next 30 years in order to sustain the Island's workforce at its 2020 level. This would represent a significant increase from the average of 100 net that has been seen over the last 12 years. In some form, migration is necessary to maintain the Island's current standard of living as required workers to fill those positions from the local workforce simply do not exist. Without migration, residents will be less able to access the care they need, restaurants will close down, and critical infrastructure will go uncleaned – oh, and what about the impact on the tax-take?

However, the steering group was aware that any migration may only form one part of the answer. Increasing the participation and productivity of the Island's local workforce was discussed extensively throughout the review, as set out in Sections 5 and 6 of the policy letter. For the avoidance of doubt, I firmly believe that work to increase the participation and productivity of the local workforce should be encouraged; however, the research and data presented in the review was clear that the scale of this problem facing the Island means bolder action is needed. It is on this basis that the review acknowledged the importance of increased economic participation and productivity. Indeed, when faced with such stark data, I believe the Island should be focused on planning for the long term, rather than doing nothing in the hope that, for example, long-term workforce changes in respect of digitalisation will lead to massive upskilling of our workforce and therefore increase productivity.

While the review is proposing the States to agree an assumption – I repeat that word: an *assumption* – of 300 net migration, I want to be absolutely clear on the implications of this assumption. Firstly, it will not automatically lead to an increase in population. The States could decide if it wanted a net migration of 1,000 per year, if it wished, but it would not automatically make any impact to increase the Island's population by this amount. Instead, the assumption allows the Island to plan for the long term in respect of housing, infrastructure, investment, public services and fiscal balance in order to accommodate the average level of net migration. Furthermore, if agreed, Proposition 2 has asked for this assumption to be reviewed not later than December 2027. That is very important, the fact that this assumption will be, if that Proposition is passed, reviewed no later than December 2027 – and in fact, thereafter every five years.

One other thing this policy letter is *not* suggesting is a Ponzi scheme, as described by the Vice-President of Policy & Resources during a recent Scrutiny hearing held in public. I was dismayed to hear this mystifying comment from somebody I greatly respect. It flies in the face of all that is contained and the excellent work of officers. The review is not putting forward a scheme of any sort. As said, the policy letter contains well-researched information. It is not in any way, shape, or form fraudulent, but in my opinion, as described in the very good *Press* article penned by the President of E&I, an 'open and honest exploration of conflicting challenges'. I was, however, comforted by acknowledgement from a majority of the Policy & Resources Committee that they completely disagreed with this description.

Furthermore, I would note that her comparison with Hong Kong is also not very helpful. Guernsey's current population is 63,000, whilst this special administrative region of China is 7.5 million. Its population density is 18,492 persons per square mile. The land area is 405 miles<sup>2</sup>. I leave the Assembly to do the maths. I must move on.

In conclusion, sir, I believe that the proposals contained in this policy letter set out a stark but realistic framework for the States to consider how the size of the population will impact the sustainability of the Island's economy over the next 30 years. It is clear that, as a consequence, preparatory steps need to be taken in respect of the Island's infrastructure, environment, and public services. This will allow the Island to plan effectively for the long term and will importantly inform other priority work streams of Government, including work on the housing infrastructure, the Human Capital Development Plan, and the review of taxation.

Sir, there can be no doubt that Guernsey is facing serious challenges. It is the decisions of this States, initially through this policy letter, that must be made in order to adequately prepare. It is time for the States to make uncomfortable but necessary decisions for the good of the Island. I would therefore ask Members to support this policy letter.

Thank you, sir.

Two Members: Hear, hear.

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, as you will realise, a number of amendments have been submitted. I have attempted to put them into what I think is a logical order; if you disagree, you disagree.

The first of those amendments is going to be amendment number 5, to be proposed by Deputy Roffey. Therefore, I invite him to lay amendment 5 if he so wishes.

[Amendment 5](#)

*In the strategic policy objective [proposition 1] replace 'up to +300' with '+200'.*

**Deputy Roffey:** I do so wish, but I would like to seek your guidance, sir, because I could very easily make three lengthy speeches during this debate – one on this amendment, one on my next amendment, and one in general debate – which are all going to be really quite similar. I would rather not inflict that on Members of the States, so if you give me a little bit of latitude, I will make it once – 'I shall say this only once!' – and do it now. It may creep a little bit into covering the material in the next amendment that I am putting forward and I will not repeat it then, but they are two sides of the same coin: what level of net migration we need to plan for and how much you can optimise the current workforce in the Island.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey, I think the best solution is you make the speech you want to make at the moment. If you do not need to say as much when you are moving the other amendment that you are proposing and possibly in general debate, then so be it.

**Deputy Roffey:** General debate will depend on what other people say, though. *(Laughter)*

I agree with Deputy Prow that there has been a lot of very good research done to back up this policy letter, but it is quite possible to have very good-quality research and for different people to draw slightly different conclusions from that same data.

Sir, the question of dependence on population growth – whether locally, regionally, or indeed, globally – is one that, in my mind, raises some very big questions and very often some extraordinary feats of denial of some absolutely basic truths. Now, I ask myself why that is, and I think it is because the easiest path both economically and socially is also a path that is utterly unsustainable. At some stage, before too long, every community around this globe is going to have to adapt to some new realities and to learn with them. Demographics are going to be very different in future. They are already different now and this is just the start. We do have to adjust our ways of working to recognise that new reality, and frankly, those communities who leave it the longest to accept that basic fact are going to be the ones that find it hardest to adapt and will do themselves a great deal of damage in the process.

Sir, a little bit of general context before turning to Guernsey's specific circumstances: after almost continuous growth in the human population throughout known history – leaving the Black Death aside for a moment – and astonishingly rapid growth since the Industrial Revolution, the global population of humans will peak this century and start to decline. Much of Europe is already there, as is Japan and several other countries. And while it was not that long ago that Asia as a whole – in particular, China and India – were the driving forces of global population growth, that is now changing completely. Almost everywhere, fertility rates are dropping, driven by several factors, including development, education, and the rising average of citizens. Today, it is really only Africa which still has the characteristics needed for a youthful, and therefore rising, population, and before too long, that will start to change too.

Now, whether Members think that is a good or bad thing is almost irrelevant; it is subjective but it does not matter in the context of this debate. But just for the record, I personally think it is an overwhelmingly good thing. The rapid rise in the human population has pushed other species to the brink – and in many cases, beyond – and coupled with a rise in consumerism, it has also threatened our natural resources and our climate.

So speaking personally, I am delighted that the era of assumed constant population growth is now passing, but it does undoubtedly throw up some very big social and economic challenges – 'some difficult questions', as Deputy Prow put it – particularly because of the fact that not only will the world's population first stabilise and then decline, but just as importantly, it is going to typically grow significantly older. This is not just a short-lived phenomenon, it is not caused just by the baby boomer generation. Yes, that is a significant aggravating factor, but the changed demographics are the new normal. From now and forever, more of our population will be elderly and fewer will be younger. That needs some serious adaptation. Without that adaptation, we will not just have the economic challenges of filling jobs: it is far more profound than that. We simply will not have the people to carry out all of the crucial tasks that any decent community needs to be done. It really is a question of failing to adapt at our peril.

Against that backdrop, I find it quite depressing to hear some people using the same old arguments in a new world, insisting that the only path forward is to grow our population, that anything else is 'managed decline'. Sir, that is a lazy argument, that is a myopic argument. It is an argument that is just like a multi-storey car park: profoundly wrong on so many levels.

Firstly, it begs the question: if the only way to be prosperous is to grow our population, then when, if ever, does that stop? Do Members think it will be easier in 30 years' time, that all we need is just one more tranche of youthful immigrants and we will then be over our difficulties? 'One more push and then we'll be there'? If any Member does have such illusions, I can disabuse them because I heard all of those arguments in this very Assembly 30 years ago and 40 years ago. I can hear the voices echoing down the years: 'Of course, we don't want to grow Guernsey's population forever, but just a few thousand more can't hurt!' It reminds me of a problem drinker – and I should know a bit about that – 'I'm going to give it up – but just not yet, not quite yet.'

Members, Guernsey is addicted to population growth. Solving our demographic problems by youthful immigration is like trying to climb up a tower using one of those staircases in an M. C. Escher drawing – or rather, perhaps, it is more like an escalator that you can never step off. As I said, the new demographics are the new normal; we cannot buck them.

Young people actually grow older quite rapidly, so the bigger your population, the more older people that your society will need to support and before too long. And that is actually going to be even more true if medium-term employment permits are done away with and more long-term ones are issued instead. There will be less churn in the population and so more permanent residents to grow old in Guernsey. So that will be very helpful, I think, in the short term economically but it will make the demographic challenges even harder down the line.

Frankly, I think the only grown-up response is to stop regarding the changing demographics as some kind of evil to be combated and instead to embrace it as an inevitable societal change which requires a new way of thinking.

So what to do? Do you bring in more young migrants – assuming, of course, that you can attract them in the first place, which is very much an open question? I do not think that is a proper answer; in fact, I do not think it is answer at all. As I said, I think it is an escalator that can never be stepped off. But I know it has one great advantage: it makes the problem of when to step off it a problem for the future States, not for ours. I think, from my experience in politics, that has always been the problem with population: 'The long-term problems can be resolved by somebody else. We are going to take the easiest route today.'

As for 'managed decline', those communities that are going to decline are those that do not start to adapt to the new realities, and pronto. Why? Because they will not be able to buy their way out of these problems for very much longer by simply growing their populations. Not only is it a myopic solution, but it will soon become an impossible solution because relatively youthful workers will become more and more of a scarce commodity and subject to massive competition from other territories to attract.

So given that backdrop, what is the right thing to do for Guernsey now? To my mind, the only workable solution is to attempt to attract certainly some new workers to cancel out the natural decline in Guernsey's population. The figure of 200 mentioned in this amendment is not a coincidence. If you look at the report, it is the amount needed over the long term: net migration of +200 to maintain a roughly static size of our population. That will not be easy but I think that is something we should try to do. So I am not a million miles from the report in that sense; it is just a question of degree. But I think we need to couple that with a relentless focus on productivity and maximising the economic participation of those living in the Island. That is the only way to avoid decline.

Let's look at the numbers first. Now, I agree with Deputy Prow: in some ways, the States making Resolutions about what Guernsey's level of migration should be is almost as academic as us making Resolutions about what the weather should be like. Sir, Canute knew he could not turn back the tide; that little stunt was there to prove to his followers the limits of his power. I hate to break it to Members, but the States' influence over net migration is pretty limited too. It is driven far more by employment opportunities and housing availability on one side and competition for those human resources from other territories on the other side.

That said, if we are going to be asked to pass a Resolution with numbers involved, I am not willing to support one which would, on the surface of it, if it became a reality, swell Guernsey's population by 4,000 souls in a relatively short time, particularly when we know the profound impact that would have on Guernsey's quality of life, on its shrinking green spaces, and on so many of our infrastructural challenges.

Housing is far from being the only one, but perhaps it is one of particular concern just now. To be fair, the policy letter pulls no punches: a net migration rate of +300 would require 3,370 additional homes just over the next 18 years, and that is before factoring in key worker housing, for which we know there is a significant demand. That is a massive requirement. In fact, going back to

what Deputy Trott was saying this morning, I am not sure it is an achievable requirement even if it were desirable.

Let's just focus on what that means for a minute. Even if we build up, which I think we must, it will still represent an enormous further loss of open land. Now, during my lifetime, as our population slowly increased, I have seen Guernsey gradually become more urban and more suburban: a clear change in the Island's character and to my mind, one that has not been a positive change. Today, we are really being asked, in my mind, to fire the starting gun on greatly accelerating that process.

And of course, it will also require a massive investment to cope with a whole range of other infrastructure issues. I am not going to patronise Members by going through them all in depth, but I am sure they are all well aware of them: our roads, our parking provision, our healthcare provision, education, water, power – the list goes on and on. In fact, such are the challenges of scaling up infrastructural provision that any financial boost which population growth may provide would be largely negated. Do not believe me? Take a look at what happened in Jersey during their well-publicised 'Spurt for Growth' policy: virtually zero net sum gain achieved by that Island. Are we not going to learn from other people's experiences?

Sorry, I am trying to control my papers here with the wind coming through.

With the greatest respect, we have heard some very simplistic arguments in regard to population in recent weeks and months. For instance, one Member keeps urging us to simply – 'Why don't you just fill the 2,000 or so vacant jobs that exist now?', as if that would be an end to it, as if Guernsey has a set, prescribed number of jobs that have to be filled and once they are filled, then everything is tickety-boo. The world does not work like that. Filling 2,000 jobs takes 3,000 or 4,000 additional people. Now, all of them, not unreasonably, want to have their hair cut and they want to buy stuff in shops and they want to eat out and they want to be treated when they are ill and they want their homes maintained by a range of artisans. In short, all of those additional people who fill the existing vacancies will consume a vast range of goods and services. And what does that do? It creates loads more jobs, at which point I have no doubt we will be told, 'Let's just fill this load of vacancies.' It is like a dog chasing its tail.

Instead of doing that, I suggest that what we target is a level of net migration which largely avoids those issues by keeping Guernsey's population roughly stable – although I do accept that the reality is unlikely to be much impacted by the States' decision in this respect. But what we can influence more directly is other key components of the solution: economic participation and productivity. We can offer carrots, sticks, and practical solutions.

Now, we have been told that economic participation rates are pretty good in Guernsey and that is true in the sense that most adults work. But it is utterly missing the point. Our participation rates are pretty poor in terms of *how much* people work. In particular, parents – usually mothers – in the more modestly-paid professions and jobs are hamstrung by the limited availability of affordable childcare. Think about it, Members. It is a simple formula. If your hourly rate of pay is well above the hourly rate you are going to have to shell out for childcare, then it is well worth working full-time or close to full-time. But if your hourly rate of pay is only marginally above the cost of childcare, you are going to focus on work which you can limit largely to school hours and to term time and probably not even return to work at all until your child is five. Now, if that is somebody's lifestyle choice, then that is fine. I am not arguing with that; I respect it. But I know that there is an army of parents out there, mainly mothers, who would actually like to work or work more if it is stacked up financially for them to do so.

So ensuring affordable childcare is not tinkering, it is not a marginal issue, it is not a nice-to-have social policy; with the perfect storm of demographics we face, it is crucial to our economy and to our society. And the fact that it will also reduce poverty, not through benefits but through work, is a real bonus.

The same is true of encouraging Islanders to work for longer. I know many will neither want to nor need to for financial reasons, and that is fair enough, entirely their choice. But it is going to become increasingly important that more elderly Islanders do remain economically active as our population ages. And for many, that is not a dreadful prospect, not a dreadful prospect at all – at

least for another two and a half years; I am not sure about after that! (*Laughter*) Indeed, often, the extended social contract that work brings is an absolute blessing for people who are past the normal retirement age. But I think the States does need to look at tipping the balance in people's decisions. We need to look at affordable ways to incentivise longer working lives.

And what about the other side of the coin, productivity? I think this is going to be 80% driven by the private sector, but the States must also do what they can to help, certainly through education and training – which is mentioned, and I applaud what is going on, as mentioned in this policy letter, about the Human Capital Development Programme – but also through possibly incentivising mechanisation and robotics. For example, I know as a case study that building a new dairy – sorry to get on a runaway of particular hobby horses – would allow a similar output with a far smaller workforce.

Now, I ask the question: are there private-sector employers in a similar position, perhaps wanting to bring about that productivity but balking at the capital cost? If so, are there any affordable incentives we can offer? For example, the UK does exactly that: they actually encourage that sort of investment through tax breaks. Now, I know because I sit on the Tax Working Party that we can hardly afford, as a Government, to forgo revenues. But the goal of productivity is so important to our community that maybe a few incentives might be worth considering, particularly if they were time-limited – not ongoing forever – in order to bring forward that sort of investment. I am not sure about that.

But I do know one thing: to rely on the tired, old solution of forever ratcheting up our population is a road to nowhere. In the short term, I think it is achievable; in the short term, it is. In fact, I think it is likely to happen at a greater rate than 300 net migration – it could well be 500 or 600 – because the level of job availability in Guernsey is such that that may well be the magnet that sucks people in. It will be at great cost to Guernsey's infrastructure and its quality of life, but it is likely to happen.

But as I have been trying to say, in the medium term, the picture is really very different indeed. I doubt very much it will even be possible to get anywhere near 300 net migration in 10 years' time as youthful workers wanting to migrate will become as rare as hen's teeth and everywhere will be competing for them.

So sir, I think we need a far more profound change in how we provide a sustainable workforce and the longer we put it off, that sort of radical change, the harder it will be to implement. Also, the longer we put it off, the more overdeveloped Guernsey becomes and the more choked our roads will become. So why wait those few years to do what we are going to have to do anyway?

Sir, I commend this amendment to the States and I apologise for pretty much introducing my next one as well. But as I say, I see the two issues as two sides of the same coin and things that need to be debated in a holistic manner.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez, do you formally second that amendment?

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Yes, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Thank you very much.  
Deputy Inder.

**Deputy Inder:** Only briefly, sir.

I was kind of expecting this speech from Deputy Roffey. But I have got some good news, I suppose, to a degree: at least Deputy Roffey and Deputy de Sausmarez – more so Deputy Roffey, actually – have accepted that we need net migration to sustain the working population. Now, I have heard in brief against any population growth over many years through his opinion columns, yet it is the same Deputy who will actually bring to the States a Future Harbour Development Plan of £300 million to £400 million; Alderney Airport, £25 million; Guernsey Dairy, £35 million – £35 million was the last figure, it is probably more than that by now; Guernsey Airport Master Plan – what is that? £50 million to £100 million? This is from STSB alone, without even thinking. I am looking at



over half a billion pounds of capital expenditure all coming from the same Deputy who appears to at least understand we need some net immigration of 200 rather than 300.

Now, this is substantial. This is a substantial piece of work for us. I have some sympathy in as much as Deputy Prow's job and the working party's job was effectively to analyse the information, realise that we have a working population – I am sorry, I have not got it right in front of me – of around 32,000, and there will be something called a 'decline'. If we lose those 5,000 or 6,000 people, all of the things that Deputy Roffey wants for his social policy, all of the things he wants to build – the money just will not be there, it simply will not be there.

I think he touched on the words 'managed decline'. I have heard those words used before. I think I actually heard it from a former member of Environment & Infrastructure when they were talking about L'Ancrese tank wall. But actually, it is more serious than this. What we have to do as a community is basically accept that the largest industry we have in this Island is – and I use a broad term – the financial sector. It is the single mine in the middle of the Welsh village and if it leaves, our problems are beyond terminal for this Island.

It is actually worse than that because we are not a Welsh valley and we do not have a mine, but we are basically that Welsh valley on a blinking Island in the middle of the sea! Our people cannot travel that easily. We have nowhere for us to go. If that mine disappears, your GST, your VAT, your Harbour Development Plans, your Alderney Airports, the Guernsey Dairy, the Guernsey Airport Master Plan, it is a sideshow to the problems that this Island will have.

What Deputy Roffey has also said: he has got this base assumption that what happens in the world outside Guernsey will be applied to Guernsey. That is his drive. He effectively said, 'What happens in Egypt or down in Morocco, somewhere, or out in Indonesia can be applied to Guernsey.' I do not believe that. I believe via policy, Guernsey has always had that opportunity to be different. It can look at the outside world and find opportunities. There is a basic assumption that, probably when I was born, there were very few old people and that cauldron effect – I think we all went to the IOD presentation where we had – and I think, unfortunately about the IOD presentation, what came out of it was the headlines about 'Everyone should have GST.' What the scary bit was was that our youth of this Island were leaving and we were doing nothing about it. Actually, it was mainly about housing. And if I remember correctly, there was almost this cauldron graph that, when I was probably born, there was a bunch of young people in the middle and no-one was living over the age of 70 and that it was happened. What is happening now is, in effect, almost looking like a candle: effectively, older people are living longer and no-one is being born.

But I genuinely think, by policy, that we can actually affect it. I am not that defeatist to go to the last issue of *The Guardian* and basically say, 'What's happening in the rest of the world can be applied to Guernsey.' I think it is entirely defeatist.

Now, Deputy Roffey also talked about economic participation rates. It just is not likely to fill or backfill the 100 that he is asking us to agree, which is 100 less than 300. And I know that because Deputy Roffey has not provided any evidence of that; he has just said it. He has just said, 'Economic participation rates are going to be the solution,' but in his speech, he did not tell you how he was going to – and that is acceptable from anyone else because it is a thought, it is an idea, it is a concept; but it is not acceptable from the President of ESS. And the reason for that is, he should have all the data as that President. He should be able to tell us what the participation rates are in Guernsey for those who can, how many people are non-employed – how many carrots, how many sticks. We have not heard anything at all. We have just heard, again, a headline that participation rates will solve the problem. We have heard nothing from the President of ESS to show us how he is going to do it.

And you cannot say this has not come down the tracks because both Deputy de Sausmarez as well, as the VP of ESS – they have had every opportunity. There is no point talking about participation rates and not coming to the States with policies. They come into the States with – certainly on a fairly regular basis – we could have dealt with Family Allowance, we could have given some people more. They could have come to ... but we have heard nothing at all. So here we go again. It is just basically grandstanding, it is entirely grandstanding. It has been possible for both of

the Members, the President of ESS and the VP of ESS, to have actually *done* something about it rather than *saying* something about it, and this is what we have time and time again.

The good news is, Deputy Roffey at least accepts that someone is going to have to pay for his great plans for the Island. What he does not want is the amount of people to pay for them; he only wants two-thirds of the people to pay for his great, grand plans. So it is entirely up to you. Certainly, Deputy Roffey has shifted somewhere in some response, but I just entirely disagree with the defeatist attitude. I have got great faith in Guernsey. There is something in there – and I think it was him who started the phrase ‘Ponzi scheme’ in one of his opinion columns – Deputy Soulsby is not here – and then repeated again ‘Ponzi scheme’. A Ponzi scheme is an illegal structure to extract money out of people.

I am very disappointed that a detailed piece of work run very quickly by members of the PIPR group – which include Policy & Resources; our NSMs, real people who are actually – Economic Development as well – in business, not people who were in business once or were never actually in business pretending that they were in business. These are real people in business who are actually in the trade, not pretending they have just come to something on a particular subject but when you look at their careers, it is just effectively – these are real people telling you that we are screaming towards a problem. It is happening everywhere.

It is a fact: of the 300 – it has not been carved up very well. I am fairly sure Deputy Vermeulen would have 300 builders tomorrow, I would have 300 accountants, I am sure Deputy Roffey would have 300 care workers. We know that there is going to be some kind of scrap, but it is not unreasonable for Deputy Prow, along with his Committee, to have done the work to tell you what the facts are to maintain our working population. And I have said it before and I will say it again: if you think Alderney is a problem today, look at Guernsey tomorrow, because that is what we are staring at. We are staring at a retirement home with a lot of service and not an awful lot of revenue.

It is a decision day for a lot of people today. Great news that Deputy Roffey has moved in some way, but I have got to take with a tiny pinch of salt some of the headline-grabbing stuff when he has entirely, both he and Deputy de Sausmarez, had the ability to effect some of the policy. You simply cannot come to this Assembly talking about something when you have the power to change something. Nothing has happened in terms of participation, nothing at all, and it is time they actually dealt with it.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy McKenna.

**Deputy McKenna:** Thank you, sir.

I sit on Home Affairs with Deputy Taylor, Deputy Aldwell, Vice-President Vermeulen, and our President, Deputy Prow, who spent his career in the Border Agency, finishing off as investigating officer, and I have to say, it is a privilege to serve under Deputy Prow with the knowledge that he possesses. I know there are concerns about migration, but if we read the legislation, it says this strategic objective of 300+ net migration would be reviewed within five years. If, for some reason, it was not working, it is going to be reviewed anyway so there is no need to fear. Deputy Roffey is right in saying we have got an ageing demographic, which is why the President of Health, Deputy Brouard, will tell us the shortage we have in the care homes, residential homes, nursing homes, the shortages he has in hospital not just of allied healthcare professionals, but also auxiliary staff, finance, construction. We obviously have a great problem.

The strategic population objective proposed through the review was clearly based upon the research and data through the work conducted. The research was clear that we cannot drive down the need for increased migration in the short time, nor will it work to increase productivity or participation leading to any improvements in the short term. There are extensive factors that influence the levels of productivity and participation in the Island’s economy. Any outcome of work to increase them is only likely to achieve benefits in the long term, which will both be immeasurable and uncertain for many years to come. This would significantly delay us in the States of Guernsey from investing in a long-term planning future for the Island.

It is therefore suggested by Home Affairs that the 300+ net migration figure as originally proposed, based upon the research, remains the most pragmatic and practical assumption at this time in order to effectively guide long-term planning in respect of the Island's infrastructure. Again, this can be reviewed within five years.

This amendment would ultimately be at odds with the research and outcomes of the review, which has clearly identified the need to repair the Island and its infrastructure for an increase in the size of the population in the long term.

I would ask the Members to strongly oppose this amendment.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

**Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

I will, I am afraid, not be supporting this amendment. I really just wanted to very briefly explain my rationale for not doing so. I think there are some real misconceptions in general in the Island about how the Island's population and population growth works. Everyone seems to have a mental model where if you keep the population stable, everything will stay the same. But of course, it does not because the demographics change, and there are several changes that have happened in the latter half of the 20th century that have really changed the way that populations grow. They are mainly the extension in people's lifespan – people are living much longer now than they have done in the past – a reduction in the number of children, in family size that has been really quite dramatic – people talk about how in days gone by, people had very large families; that is now a rarity – and of course, people are having children much later in life as well. The extension in lifespan reduces the amount of housing that is available whilst at the same time, the reduction in fertility decreases the demand. So even though it looks stable, the population is actually ageing.

But of course, one of the most standout factors is the emigration of young people away from the Island without an equivalent amount of immigration to counteract that. Young people have been leaving Guernsey in droves. The fact is that there are numerous factors and reasons why young people would want to leave the Island, the main one of which is just that housing is too expensive. But there is also just a lack of opportunity where people do not see jobs in the type of variety that they would like to have available and many young people just do not see a future for themselves in Guernsey.

That is an issue for us. It creates a demographic issue for us in Guernsey because although it looks on the surface like we have a stable population, we have many more elderly and retired people within that population, which of course means that health and social care costs increase because most of the costs are incurred towards that end of people's lives; pensions, of course, become relatively more expensive for the Island; and at the same time, we have a lack of the ETI receipts, the Income Tax receipts from people who are of working age and paying into it. That is an existential threat to the Island. It is not sustainable to be able to continue like that. It is the demographic time bomb and that is what is currently happening in the Island.

Now, a few people have said that trying to counteract that with immigration or with a net increase that is intended to increase the working-age population is a bit like a Ponzi scheme; it is not, though, really much like a Ponzi scheme. A Ponzi scheme is indefinite. It can never end. It only ever grows. It would only be like a Ponzi scheme if you assumed that those factors would continue to increase at the same rate indefinitely. But in actual fact, it is not really accurate to say that those factors are likely to continue increasing at the same rate that they had done during the latter half of the 20th century; they are likely to pass inflection points and head towards a plateau, not forever ratcheting up.

In summary, I would respond to Deputy Roffey, who implored us to look at the experiences of other islands – with Jersey as an example. I would say another island to look at for an example is Alderney. With apologies to Alderney Representative Snowdon: Alderney forms the perfect example of ... there have been a series of policy decisions which have meant that Alderney has an ageing population and that poses a number of challenges for the Island that Alderney will have to address

and that Guernsey will have to address if we are not able to maintain a working population in the way that we would like to.

That has implications all across how the States of Guernsey does business and we must try everything that we can do to make Guernsey a more attractive place for young people to want to live, to want to stay in the Island, to want to return to the Island for Islanders who are living overseas in the UK and would like to come back but are not able to find somewhere to live. It should be something that runs through everything we do, thinking about, 'How are we making this Island the sort of place where young people and families would want to come and would want to stay and would want to live?' If we do not do that, we are just going to find this wedge continually getting wider, to the point where our finances will not be able to sustain the type of lifestyle that we have enjoyed for a number of decades.

For this reason, I am afraid I will not be supporting the amendment. Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** A quick one, Deputy Vermeulen?

**Deputy Vermeulen:** It is not a quick one. I just looked at my watch there, sir.

**The Bailiff:** That is alright. We will adjourn until 2.30 then.

**The Assembly adjourned at 12.30 p.m.  
and resumed its sitting at 2.30 p.m.**

**Population & Immigration Policy Review –  
Debate continued**

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Vermeulen.

**Deputy Vermeulen:** Thank you, sir.

I am a very pro-business Deputy and I have been through the other side of the introduction of the population regime into Guernsey. On that occasion, in the previous Assembly, there were 40 amendments, sir. It was like watching death by a thousand cuts. And a lot of policy was made up on the floor with no rhyme or reason from lots and lots of different directions. I was a huge opponent of changing the way things were done at that time. The moment it was put into Law, I decided to work and make it work for my business. We had to navigate that strategy, and it was tougher than before and it was difficult.

Fast-forward a few more years, and we hit Brexit – we did not realise what Brexit actually looked like until it was happening the next day – and we also had the COVID pandemic. Again, as a former opponent but now sitting on Home as Vice-President, I, with the Committee and the support of the President, rolled the sleeves up and got to work on making something that was not perfect, sir, work as best as it can.

Now, the resemblance of what we have got now compared to two years ago – it bears absolutely no resemblance. But working on Home, all members of the Committee were getting phone calls, and the same on Economic Development, from concerned employers. There was flexibility in that, sir, and we made it work. We got through it. Nothing is perfect.

Now, something I felt strongly that should have been done in the previous Assembly but was not – and I was not there – was a review of this Law on population and migration, and I am delighted, through the chairmanship of Deputy Prow, that that has been conducted so thoroughly, sir. In his speech, he touched on the depth and breadth of knowledge of the people attending that steering committee. I was certainly on that, I know the President of Economic Development was there. So was Deputy Roffey, so was Deputy de Sausmarez, who are now tabling this very simple amendment

that on the face of it, looks quite innocent. It is only changing the numbers from 300 to 200, just a very innocent change of one digit.

Now, to me, first and foremost, it feels like I have been transported back in time because four months ago I think this came up on the PIPR and it was considered. And Deputy Roffey – whom I have got respect for – he was brave enough to say that he would prefer not to have anyone coming to Guernsey, but he realised that that was not possible – and I respect him for that, sir. He is entitled to his point of view. It is certainly different from my point of view but I respect him for that and what he said. It took me back; I could not believe somebody could say such a thing in such troubled times as we are in now where we are all competing for staff who do not seem to want to travel too far from their own homes. Jersey, the Isle of Man, the UK, the whole of Europe is searching for staff – France, Holland in particular. We are all looking for staff at the moment. And there are many jobs in Guernsey which we have got to fill.

So yes, that came up. I complained during the meeting to the President and said, 'I was ready to vote that the target should be 300.' 'No, Deputy Vermeulen, we have got to consider this.' So the meeting was paused, it was thoroughly reviewed, and at the next meeting, it had been considered and it was deemed to be a non-starter.

Now, I will explain very simply in layman terms to you how that number has come about. It is a guide, first and foremost; it is not written in stone. But it is based on, over the next 10 years, we are going to lose 3,000 staff. They are going to retire because people are getting older in Guernsey. Our working population is going to contract. There are youngsters coming out from school and births on the Island cancel out the deaths on the Island, so despite my endeavours, there is not much change to that number. So we do rely on bringing staff into the Island and our guest workers are absolutely essential to the economy.

Who has got the right to stand in the way of progress? If we look at the Island, if we look at Guernsey – and we are not Singapore, we are not Hong Kong, we are not Jersey, and we certainly do not want to be Jersey – who has got the right to stand in the way of progress? There are some big bills heading our way in the States and we need plenty of tax revenue. We are challenged at the moment. There is talking about going into a recession – and that is the USA, possibly, going into a recession. If that happens, well, if they sneeze, we catch a cold; that is what is going to happen.

So difficult times ahead. We are facing headwinds. And I think the sensible thing ... I am not going to vote for this amendment and I would urge you not to support this amendment. I think support what the steering committee originally found which was that to maintain the working population, not increase, was the best way. The message that goes out to the rest of the world if you decide to have a lower target is that Guernsey has pulled up the drawbridge and we are going to have a contracting workforce. And sir, we cannot afford that. I do not want it. The industry on the Island – retail, construction, finance, tourism – it cannot afford that. It has worked so hard for so many years and has gradually increased its population – very steady, gradual increase – over the years. So who would stand in the way of progress? I do not think we can afford to.

Deputy Inder pointed out very ably how the bills are stacking up to – was it half a billion? And how much was the Dairy? Was it £350 million? £35 million, I think it was. These are big-ticket items. If you are going to have a small workforce, you are going to have to start cutting your cloth, you are going to have to trim that fat, sir; that is what we have got to do. We should be looking to be making savings. I respect P&R and I look towards P&R, I have got utmost respect for our Chief Minister. But I look towards our senior Committee, with respect, to make good observations. I was not impressed with the Vice-President calling the work that we were so due-diligently a Ponzi scheme. It was a very sad day for me. I will admit, I lost a bit of respect on that purely because we had professional accountants and people in business who were helping us, assisting us to get through this and they were muddling to make sure that we could attract accountants to Guernsey; that with these changes that we were making, we would still be competitive. That is what is really important.

So as much as I like you, Deputy Roffey, I am not going to support it and I would urge Members to vote against this amendment.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Alderney Representative Roberts, is it your wish to be relevé?

**Alderney Representative Roberts:** Yes, please, I would, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Okay, we will mark you as present.  
Deputy Ferbrache.

**Deputy Ferbrache:** Sir, we have heard excellent speeches today to this relatively short debate to date, but the two standout speeches were those of Deputy Prow and Deputy Roffey from different viewpoints.

When we look at it, one thing that we cannot stand against is economic change because the world has changed dramatically. Deputy Roffey talked about population almost as though elsewhere in the world except for Africa, it was shrinking. That is just not actually, factually true. In 1800, there were a billion people in the world. It took until 1927 for there to be two billion. On some date in November – I think 15th November – there will be 8 billion people living on this planet. Then it will increase in the next 14 years to 9 billion, then to 10 billion, and then it will slow. It will take another 33 years thereafter to go from 10 billion to 11 billion, but that still means – I think that is by about 2088. So within the next 70 years, the world's population will go up from 8 billion to 11 billion and they all want to live on this relatively small planet.

But Deputy Roffey is partly right because birth rates have been lessening. Fifty years ago, the world's population was growing by 2% per annum; it is now growing by just less than 1% per annum. But it is still growing.

In relation to Guernsey, when I look at the population, I looked at this very helpful facts-and-figures booklet that we get every year: 'Guernsey, 1922', this one says – '2022'. It goes back, in fact, to 1921. I looked at the census for 1921, and the census for 1921 showed there were 38,315 people living on this Island. Now, that had fallen in the previous 10 years by 8%, not surprisingly, because there had been a 12% reduction in the male population because some of them were dead on the fields of Passchendaele and Mons and various other places. But generally, thereafter, the population grew, but not all the time. In 1976, the population was 53,637, and in 1981, it had fallen only slightly to 53,313 because the economic circumstances of the world had changed. It has again gained a pace – and indeed, in 2016, it was 62,208, and in 2021, it was 63,423. I think it is now about 63,800. So it has increased.

What the report led by Deputy Prow says is that you have got to run very hard just to stand still – because that is what we are talking about. A 300+ growth is working very hard to stand still. Now, Deputy Roffey said we want people to work longer. I think there are three of us in here who are over 65 and we are working longer. But there are not enough people of our age working longer. We want women to be more productive – of course we do – so therefore, we have got to change our working practices to make women be able to go out and work longer hours, different hours in a different way.

He also said we want affordable childcare. Absolutely, we want affordable childcare. But if you have affordable childcare and therefore more people take advantage of childcare, you are going to need more nurseries, more childcare providers. If you are not going to grow your population, where are those childcare providers going to come from? You cannot pick and choose – I hear mutterings but he has got his chance to make his reply when he comes back in due course, Deputy Roffey. There is the conundrum: you cannot pick and choose.

Now, in any event, if one reads the report – nobody has actually quoted, I think, very much from this report so far, so let me quote from paragraph 6.20, which is headed 'Human Capital Development Plan'. What this says is:

Whilst net migration forms part of the solution to the Island's workforce requirements, the Steering Group noted that increasing the productivity of the local and existing workforce also plays a pivotal role. This ambition is currently being driven through separate workstreams of government, principally the Human Capital Development Plan, which is being drafted to include proposals to:

Upskill and re-skill the local workforce, and maximise participation;

Increase productivity in the economy;

Develop Guernsey's human capital through data-led and joined-up actions; and

Ensure Guernsey's learning and skills system meets customer needs.

This is not a one-trick pony, this report; it is addressing all these issues that Deputy Roffey wants us to address. Now, you can be as productive as you like, you can do as much as you like; but if you have got elderly people – and we have got an ageing demographic, and we have seen it not just in this debate, in other debates – those who are over 65 have increased – that is the growth rate of our population – and those over 85 are going to grow even more exponentially in the next five, 10, 15, 20 years. Those people are going to need carers. You cannot care for them by computer, you cannot care for them by just giving them tablets. They have actually got to have people to serve their needs, they have got to have people who need to look after them, who are there to look after them. Those people have to live somewhere, those people have to have the services that will be required that this Island will have to deliver.

Would it not be wonderful? I have talked about 1800 and I have gone back to 1921 and the 1921 census, but about 1800 to 1810, there were about 20,000 people living in Guernsey. If you wanted to marry a girl and you lived in St Peter Port, you would not go to St Sampson's; would go to the other part of St Peter Port to marry the girl because the people that were coming into this Island were very few. We were a small, indigenous, inbred population. My lot were here – I was not here then but my lot were here then, the Ferbraches were here then – and I think my great-great-grandfather Daniel was there – he had one or two children. They were there then.

But now, of our 63,000 or so folk that are privileged to live in the best place in the world to live, on this particular Island, 33,000 or thereabouts are indigenous Guernsey folk like me, 30,000 come from elsewhere. The makeup of our population has changed. We are more cosmopolitan, we are more worldly. When I was a boy, going to the mainland was like going to China; nowadays, we travel. Nearly everybody travels regularly. The world is a smaller place in that sense. So what do we do?

Now, of course, we do have problems. But again, this report that Deputy Prow has referred to sets out the facts. It does not say there are not any difficulties. I have already read one paragraph; there is another paragraph, 6.16:

The estimated development potential is presented as a lower and higher range for the number of dwellings that could be achieved. The total estimated yield from the remaining 26 sites is 968 to 1,954 dwellings. The SHLAA includes the housing allocation sites; the yield identified in the SHLAA ...

– whatever that is –

... update excluding the allocated sites is 342 to 951 dwellings (however ... [they are] not all eligible ...)

It goes on to say in relation to that, in paragraph 6.17, having built on that:

The SHLAA uses a range of housing density assumptions, depending on the size and nature of the sites identified, of between 40 and 110 dwellings per hectare. Applying these densities to the forecasts suggests that, to accommodate an average net migration level of +300 per year, a total of between 31 and 84 hectares – in other words, between 41 and 114 football fields, or 25% and 75% of L'Ancrese Common – would need to be allocated to housing development by 2040.

Therefore, a big chunk of land, whether it is 25 or 50 or 75 football pitches. And indeed, when you go back and look at a different paragraph in the same policy letter, you can see that even at net growth of 200 people per annum, you are still going to need over 1,000 extra houses between now and 2040. And if it is more than that – the difference is about 800 or 900, perhaps 1,000, houses

over that period of time, the greater the difference between 200 and 300. The figures are in this policy letter so if I have misquoted them, Members can see them accurately.

Now, the population will grow in any event, even if we did the most restrictive of residential provisions in relation to Guernsey, which we cannot do in the modern day. We used to ban people – if you owned an Open Market property at one time, even if you were local, you could not live on the Local Market. That was one provision of one of our housing Laws. We have moved on. We have realised people have got human rights. We have actually got a human rights statute now from 2000 which came into force in September 2006. So we cannot go back to old Guernsey. And literally, I am an old Guernseyman, but we cannot go back to life as it was; we have got to go forward with the progress that is necessary.

Now, I would like to be like Deputy Roffey and sit on a garden bench with him, both of us could chew straw, put our Guernseys on, eat ormers one day because that is a pleasure for me – or bean jar another day because I like bean jar – be the old Guernseymen that we both are. But that is not the way the world is anymore. Our children do not want that kind of world. Those of us who have got grandchildren of a certain age, they do not want that kind of world. They want a more cosmopolitan, integral world.

Now, if we want Guernsey to stay at a population of circa 63,000 – it will not do that anyway because economics ... whatever we do today – tomorrow, whenever we conclude debating this policy letter – in three to five years' time – as Deputy McKenna said, it has got to be reviewed in five years' time, looked at in five years' time anyway – it will be much different. You have got to have a plan. If we remember, in *Blackadder*, there was always a 'cunning plan' that never worked and ended up with them running over the top into the battlefield and getting shot up in 1917 or whenever it was in the last *Blackadder*. In connection with all of that, we have to realise that the world has changed and Guernsey, as wonderful as it is – and to me, it is the best place in the world – has to change.

Now, I was surprised ... Deputy Inder, I think, issued a challenge when he spoke late this morning, about 'What did P&R think of the Vice President's comment that this was a "Ponzi scheme"?' I disassociate myself completely from that remark. Ponzi was a fraud, if you recall. You rob Peter to pay Paul and eventually, there was no money. There was a recent American example of that who ran rather foul; I cannot remember if he is still alive, but anyway, in respect of all that. To say that a well-researched document where there were representatives from all the senior Committees and there were outside sources of expert assistance given to those representatives is a Ponzi scheme is, in my view, a very unfortunate choice of language and should be regretted. We should not use unnecessary, hyperbolic language or aggressive adjectives in describing a topic such as this; we should be speaking in ordered tones.

As I say, I pay considerable respect to Deputy Roffey's speech and I understood the essence of it. But when we look at where we are, we have to again look at some facts and figures. We might not like the facts and figures, we might wish they were different. We might wish we could live to 100; we all might wish, some of us who are old enough, to go back to 1960, 1961, 1962 when Spurs won the double. We wish we could do that every year – it has not happened since, sadly.

In respect of all of that, we have got to look at the policy letter itself. Let's look at some of the truths. Paragraph 4.2:

The vast majority of respondents said that they currently recruited from the local workforce. However, four out of five of those who recruit from the local workforce reported challenges in doing so. The most common reasons were due to a lack of available on-Island applicants; insufficient skills/experience of applicants; and high or unrealistic salary expectations. Over half of respondents stated that they recruited from outside the Island, with a majority of those reporting challenges in doing so. The most cited challenges included the cost or availability of housing, and the Immigration and Employment Permit processes.

Let me just say in relation to that: I have practical experience – not only *legal* experience, I have got *practical* experience – of dealing with population management personnel. They are truly excellent. Where there is a problem and there is not much we can do about it other than what Deputy Prow and his team are doing is immigration because we are not a sovereign state; we are a



Crown Dependency. The rules that apply in England have got to basically apply here. There was another amendment last week about that which is dangerous because it seeks to interfere with that; I am not quite sure how it is going to do it but there we are. We will deal with that in the due passage of time.

So what do we want to do? None of this is magic because, as I say, magic does not really exist in the real world. Paragraph 4.5 says that most respondents want to:

Improve the availability and provision of housing;

– yes, yes, yes –

simplify the application process;  
address concerns about the cost of living in Guernsey;

– yes indeed –

reduce fees;

And then when we look at the statistics, most people are economically active between about the ages of 16 and 65. And even though we all want to encourage people who are older than that to continue working if their health permits and their circumstances permit, that is when you are physically at your best, that is when you are generally mentally your best, between 16 and 65. We may not like to say that but that is the truth of it.

Then when we look at it, we see that between paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2, the working population, aged between 16 and 64, in June 2021 was 2,009 people smaller than 10 years previously. It fell from 42,500 to 40,500. For us, a tiny little community like us, that is a very big fall in productive people, most of whom will be earning money, spending money in the community, paying tax, and living in our community.

What has gone up is us oldies. We have gone up dramatically and they are going to keep going up dramatically. You cannot turn back nature. We have got a truly wonderful Health Service and hospital service in Guernsey. But we saw the statistics in P&R just the other week, I think; my colleagues will correct me if I am wrong. We have got 451 vacancies in Deputy Brouard's empire, if I can call it that – I do not mean it in any pejorative sense. We have got a Health Service that is the envy of just about anywhere else. Of course it is not perfect and there are certain services, because we are so small, that we have got to avail ourselves from elsewhere. But nowhere else in a community of our size approaches the quality of the product – it is not a product, the *service* – that is offered. We can only do that because we are a vibrant, balanced community. We have to continue to be a vibrant, balanced community.

Now, I know in January, we are going to have a tax review debate and I hope that whatever decision is made, people in this Assembly who are charged with making decisions do not just say, 'I don't like that, I'm not going to do that. That's very difficult. I'd rather kick the can down the road. I don't like' – for example; I do not know if it is going to be brought in but there will be a decision made in due course – 'GST, it's horrible. We'll come up with some other solution.' Here, there is no other solution to what is being proposed. It is not absolute, it is certainly not going to end up with 300+ over the next x number years. There will be fallow periods. I gave an example between 1976 and 1981 when the population actually shrunk.

Just looking arithmetically: if we had about, say, 15,000, 18,000 people living in Guernsey just after 1800, the world's population has gone up by a multiple of eight in that period from then to, in fact, November of this year. Our population has gone up – 8 times 15 is what? 120, is it not? 120,000: we would have a population of 120,000 if we just increased it arithmetically. We realise we cannot do that because our landmass is too small.

But again, I come back to the very able speech by Deputy Roffey: 'I don't really want anybody extra. I put down 200+ but I don't really want that' – that is the undercurrent of what he is saying. 'We'll manage.' I have not heard Deputy Roffey or anybody else – and there are lots of other people

who I know will speak in this debate – tell us how we are going to manage. We are all in favour, as I said – I am going to finish where I began – of increasing productivity; we are all in favour of making it easier for people to work longer in their lives, if they so wish; we are all in favour of increasing childcare provision. But where are we going to pay for it? How are we going to do it? And how is that going to make any difference to the fact that just to stand still economically – not to turn into a Hong Kong or a Singapore, but just to stand still economically – we are going to have to increase our population? I wish we did not have to do it but there is no option.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Moakes.

**Deputy Moakes:** Thank you, sir.

We probably have somewhere between 1,000 and 3,000 open positions in Guernsey with almost zero unemployment. In other words, we do not have a spare 1,000 to 3,000 people looking for work. Those people who do move from one role to another are in reality filling one open position by creating another open position; this is unsustainable. I was a member of the working group that helped develop this policy letter and I can tell you that a huge amount of work went into it from many people sat in this room today and from many experienced people residing on the Island who fed into it.

This amendment suggests that we should reduce the strategic objective of +300 net migration per annum to +200 net migration per annum and fill the remaining 100 roles by increasing productivity and participation rates. As has already been said, this policy letter recognises the importance of increasing productivity and participation rates but it also recognises that this will only fill a small number of open positions. For example – I will be flippant for a second, here – how many people who have worked hard all their lives and are enjoying their retirement will want to retrain as an electrician or an accountant? No offence to electricians or accountants, by the way.

This amendment completely misses the point. Even with the strategic objective of +300 net migration, it is still going to take us years to fill all of the open positions, so reducing the number to +200 means it will take even longer. Businesses are already struggling and they need our help. The strategic objective of +300 net migration is based on research and data; it is not a figure that someone has made up.

If you still have any concerns, think about this: just because we set the level of +300 net migration does not mean that we will attract anywhere near that number. Guernsey is not the only place facing a jobs crisis: most other jurisdictions are facing similar issues, with companies struggling to fill vacancies. We are competing with them for the same people. Let's not forget the high cost of living and housing in Guernsey. Amendments like this further reduce our ability to compete with other jurisdictions and attract workers, which we desperately need.

One last point: we are all aware of the size of the fiscal deficit, as a number of people have mentioned again already, and the hard choices that we will need to make in the coming months. Whether the number of open positions is 1,000 or 3,000, just think about how much Income Tax we are losing every month and how much more spend there would be in our local businesses if we could fill these roles.

Sir, I implore Deputies to reject this amendment because it does absolutely nothing to help solve the jobs crisis and sends out a very negative message to companies and institutions across both the private and public sectors.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez.

**A Member:** Oh, this will be good.

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Apologies to Deputy Brouard: he definitely beat me to his feet, but anyway. *(Laughter)*

I am going to start, actually, with a thank you to Deputy Prow for chairing what has to be one of the most difficult projects that this States has yet tackled. I commend him for the way in which he did it: it was very collegiate. I was very pleased to be invited to join the working party. And I do apologise to all my fellow members of that working party for being somewhat of a broken record, especially on certain issues such as productivity and housing. I do appreciate that the policy letter is honest enough to reflect those issues. It does not gloss over and pretend that this is easy and I do commend it for that. I think that is the right place to start.

I am seconding this amendment because – no-one is arguing, by the way, with the evidence that was presented. I am certainly not, I know Deputy Roffey is not. No-one is contesting for a moment that 2 and 2 equals 4 in that policy letter. It is much more about – and this does come down to a judgement call which is wider than a difficult political consideration: it is about whether that is even the right calculation in the first place, really. That is what it comes down to for me.

Now, I think there is a quote that is often attributed to Einstein which goes something along the lines of the definition of madness:

... is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

Deputy Moakes, when he spoke just now, he used the word 'unsustainable'. Actually, that is interesting because Deputy Moakes used the word 'unsustainable' to support his argument to reject this amendment but I use the word 'unsustainable' to justify supporting it. To me, that is exactly what worries me. As Deputy Roffey explained when he opened on this debate, it is like getting onto an escalator with no idea of when – or indeed, how – you can ever step off; it is indefinite. Basically, what is outlined here is population growth. Deputy Inder did confuse, when he spoke, the concept of population growth with 'immigration'; I think the policy letter, incidentally, does a very good job of distinguishing between those two things.

But obviously, there are lots of factors that do contribute to overall population size and I think it is a lot more sustainable to be able to *sustain* – the clue is in the name – a population roughly where it is compared with a year-on-year increase in population as a result of that additional inward migration that is being proposed in the original Proposition. Sustainability is exactly what worries me. If we are thinking long-term, if we are thinking about the impact on future generations, how is this not just kicking this problem down the road? How are we going to do things?

To me, the answer is in doing things differently. Deputy Ferbrache, when he spoke, talked about having to run to stand still, and I completely accept that – if we are determined to run along the same track. What Deputy Roffey has argued very well for, I think, is to run on a different track, to do things a little bit differently, and it is this fundamental assumption at the base of all the figures that are set out very clearly in the policy letter. We take things as they are now and just scale them up. At the heart of this is a fiscal problem: it is a case of 'How do we get enough money coming into the public coffers to sustain public services roughly as they are now? How do we keep that equilibrium that we have currently got in terms of that fiscal equilibrium?' That is all predicated on an assumption that our productivity is not going to significantly change. A lot of it does come down to this issue of whether productivity can significantly change.

Now, the policy letter makes a case that in some respects, our productivity is high. I think that is really, mostly, a reflection of the fact that we are a finance centre and it is all to do with our GDP. Anyone who has ever heard me speak about GDP before will know my views on how inadequate that is, in some respects, for capturing that bigger picture. It does not necessarily measure the most useful things. However, if we are going to measure productivity against GDP, it is going to look like we have got a relatively high productivity, but I do not think that gives us the picture that we really need.

I think there are plenty of other bits of evidence – for example, the Women in Work Index. PwC – I do not know if I am allowed to name them but I just have – they produce a report every couple of years on Women in Work, in the Channel Islands specifically. My screen has just gone blank now so I cannot check that it is accurate but I think the latest report suggested that just increasing women's

participation in the workplace to the same levels as more productive nations would give us a 5% boost in GDP to the tune of about £176 million a year. That is not to be sniffed at.

Obviously, the answer is not just 'Help more women into work,' but I use that statistic to illustrate that there is a potential gap at the moment that we are not fulfilling. So yes, people are working: they have to. It is really expensive to live here. People have got very little choice but to work, really, and that is why our participation rates are quite high on paper. But as Deputy Roffey outlined, so often, the constraints are around issues like affordable childcare and that puts the brakes on people's productivity. With apologies – because I do know I talked about this a lot in the working group – we really need to look very seriously at unleashing that potential. And that can help change the fundamental equation that lies at the heart of this strategic objective and I think that is important.

Again, I am going to flip something that Deputy Ferbrache just said on its head, really. He said something along the lines of 'Of course, we all favour more affordable childcare' – I will be holding him to that! (*Laughter*) – 'and all these other things, but who is going to pay for it?' I think we can flip that on its head and say, 'Who is going to pay for population growth? And in what ways?' There is a financial cost to growing our population because they have to live somewhere –

**Deputy Ferbrache:** Point of correction?

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** I give way.

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Ferbrache.

**Deputy Ferbrache:** What I actually said in relation to affordable childcare was that we need the people to provide that childcare – the nurseries, etc. That is what I actually said.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez.

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Great, I will take that as wholehearted support for more affordable childcare, nonetheless.

But yes, absolutely. This is done in other places and they see a net gain; this is the point. It is a net gain to the economy when that more affordable childcare, which I am really looking forward to Deputy Ferbrache's wholehearted support for later on, is put in place. We have got, actually, pretty lamentable childcare provision compared to many other places in terms of its affordability and access to it. And of course, I am absolutely delighted that the States now supports 15 hours a week in term-time; I think that is a huge step forward. Deputy Dudley-Owen in the last States' Meeting gave us an indication of how that was beginning to pay off but I think we have got so much further to go if we are really to tap into that currently trapped potential.

So that is just one example. I do not want to give the impression that is the only thing we can do. Deputy Roffey has talked about other age groups. But I would caveat our participation rates with a word of warning. It does not give you that more granular detail that we need. And actually, ironically, one of the key bits of data that we do not have is income per hour worked, which is a really important thing to understand in terms of productivity. Ironically, that was all linked to the secondary pensions programme going through, which has now been delayed. So that data has also been delayed. So that is one of the reasons I very much hope Members will support secondary pensions when that comes along at the next meeting.

If we take a step back, I think it is about joining the dots. Deputy Ferbrache did say, 'It is all very easy to support things like more affordable childcare.' I think it is all very easy to support growing the population at a particular level. If we are going to look at it simplistically and just say, 'We need to put more people in in order to get more income' – or to get roughly the same income out, actually, the same revenue – 'out,' I think that is fine on paper to many people, but I think the rubber really hits the road in terms of what that looks like in real life. Those people have to live somewhere,

they all need housing. This is something – I am sure no one needs of reminding of this – that we have got a significant pressure on at the moment. Irrespective of bringing an increased number of people into the Island year on year, this is a demand that is so far away from being met and it takes time.

People will often, on the one hand, say, 'Yes, I do think we need to grow the population,' but then when you say, 'Okay' – we heard it earlier on: when Deputy Oliver was answering questions on behalf of the DPA, she was fielded a question about 'What are you going to do about over-development in the north of the Island?' People really care about the material impacts of a growing population. We struggle as it is in terms of balancing those needs in a way that is sympathetic. I just want to draw the dots, really, in that bigger picture and remind Members that there are very firm connections between an increasing population and the things that they might not like about an increased population, on the other hand.

Most pertinently, two issues in my mandate which I know come up time and time again with every planning application are the loss of green spaces and the traffic impact. It is not just a theoretical exercise. I am really just hoping that Members do bear in mind the very material impacts that will flow from this decision – notwithstanding the fact that of course, we still have not found whatever levers we are going to use. I think all those arguments are quite circular. I am still trying to get my head around how we plan for something when we do not really have the levers to make it happen.

I think fundamentally, Deputy Roffey is right: I do not think we can just scale up the system that we have currently got. I do think this calls for a more fundamental shift in how we do things, about how we arrange that fiscal equation at the heart of everything. I just do not think it is infinitely scalable and that is why I think it would be a much more sustainable solution to work on the basis of keeping a more sustainable, steady population rather than a year-on-year increase in population and change some of the fundamentals that underpin that.

So I very much hope people will support this amendment, but if not, I very much hope that they are prepared to look the impacts of this decision in the whites of the eyes when they start to materialise. And I think the sad thing about this is that that is a bit of a slow burn. Many of the material impacts will take quite a long time to take effect and I just hope that people are able to, at this time, think about the long-term ramifications of big strategic decisions like this and take that into account – and especially, think about future generations and consider: if we do not have an answer for it now, how do we expect our children to find an answer in 20 years' time?

So I hope people will support this amendment. Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Brouard.

**Deputy Brouard:** Thank you, sir.

I have been at a bit of a dilemma with this particular amendment. I am not going to support it and I think I will give you my reasons, but I will also give a couple of reasons as to why I am still going to keep my eyes open.

I think the couple of comments, certainly, from Deputy Ferbrache were very persuasive in the argument that we do need, especially in the short term, to increase our labour, especially for all the reasons that he gave. The other reason I am going to support it is, I am going to take some of Deputy McKenna's advice. Do not forget: there is a five-year review on this. That gives me that bit of comfort.

But as I said, I go into this with my eyes open. My struggle – and it has been for many years – is: what is the sustainable amount of population for Guernsey? Is it 50,000? Is it 60,000? Is it 70,000? Is it 120,000? Which figure is sustainable? Or do we always have to keep on going? That is the struggle I have had.

And I think as Deputy Parkinson mentioned in the *Press* article today about Jersey's economy and their strive for growth, I think the idea was that they were going to increase their population and there would be massive growth. What they managed to do was increase their population and

not much else. Now they are going to have an even bigger population to fund through their old age, etc., as they become elderly and become permanent Island residents. If we are going to do that same path, I certainly would not be in favour of that.

I think the other issue we also need to consider, which is my third eye-opener, is that if we are going to increase the size of the Island's ... the Island's population has really been governed by two things: the economy; and more importantly, the housing stock that is available. If we are going to be dramatically increasing the housing stock, that means that there will be more houses, which means that we will be attracting, in some cases, people to the Island. As we attract those people back, how can we be certain without the levers in place that we attract the right people, whoever that happens to be? There are many Islanders, of my age as well, who are living in other countries around the world who may well like to come back to their home Island to retire. It may be nice for us to have Grandpa back, but on the other hand, Grandpa is not going to be working in the bars in Town, surely.

That is the dilemma: who do we attract back to the Island and how do we do it and what levers do Home and P&R have in place to decide who comes back? We have not got those levers in place at the moment. I am very keen on Island birth-right and if you have got that right to come back, you have got that right to come back. But that is in conflict with what we may need for the actual economy of the Island.

So with those three caveats about what size of the population we think is sustainable, if we can ever find that position, just look at what happened in Jersey and just consider how we ensure that we have the people that the economy needs to drive forward because there are many other people who have got rights to come back, and rightly so, to Guernsey. So those are some really awkward dilemmas, but I am afraid – certainly for the short time – I am not able to support the amendment.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** Thank you, sir.

I want to be a little bit controversial in terms of a matter that I have spoken about in this Assembly on numerous previous occasions, and that is the issue around social engineering. I am going to base this speech around the premise that both Deputy Roffey and his seconder and the Home Department are right: 200 is a reasonable number under certain circumstances and 300 is a better number under others. If we are managing to recruit, in an ideal world, 200 *single* 25-year-old-something postgraduates – accountants, artisans, care workers, whatever – that is infinitely better than attracting 200 who bring with them numerous dependents who may or may not ever be economically active in our Island. Deputy Brouard made the point about how we need to be cuter about attracting people back.

In my own family, sir, I have a son who is forging a career as a qualified accountant in Toronto – he is extremely happy – and I have a daughter who has come back to Guernsey post-grad because of the very high housing costs in London. Housing costs have brought her back rather than kept her away.

Let's just put some flesh on the bones. We have had this discussion before about someone on average earnings but it is worth repeating with the tax debate just around the corner: if someone is earning £37,000 a year, the first £13,000 are tax-free, which means he or she pays tax on £24,000. Let's keep it really simple: that is £5,000. Now, if someone is 25 or something, the chances of them needing any form of public service is pretty slim. They may come before your court, sir, for having too much to drink on a Saturday night; they may require the occasional visit to A&E. But the truth is, their demands on most public services are minimal but they are also spending in the economy. The ideal citizen from a GDP perspective – whether they are involved in the care sector or, for that matter, in the financial services sector – is someone of that profile.

But as soon as the dependents start ratcheting up, we have got this issue where to go through our education system, we know that a child in the secondary system will cost £12,000. In that scenario, even if both parents are working full-time on average earnings, they will not raise anywhere near enough tax to simply educate their children. Now, if they are in the social care system, then clearly, there is a trade-off. But if they are working commercially, the amount of extra value to the business they generate will, in most cases, not be enough, even with the corporate tax, for them to be a net benefit to the community.

I give way.

**Deputy Matthews:** I thank Deputy Trott.

I have heard this argument before in a previous debate about how parents of children can be seen as being a net cost on the taxpayer because of the cost of education. And it is, of course, true that in general, people's costs start quite high when they are young, dip down in their adolescence, and then rise back up towards retirement.

I think, though, that the way that Deputy Trott presents it is not quite the full picture. You are representing the costs of the children and attributing them to the parents, whereas of course, the children are, themselves, future taxpayers. To attribute the cost of education entirely to the parents does not entirely represent the picture, where in many cases, those children will be future taxpayers and will, of course, themselves contribute once they reach their 20s, 30s, and 40s.

I just wanted to add that nuance into Deputy Trott's argument.

**Deputy Trott:** Sir, I am delighted that Deputy Matthews did because it leads me on to another point I make regularly: if in the scenario that I am painting here where the child or children are educated by us all the way through to the time when they graduate from university but then do not return to Guernsey, we have had all of this cost without any of the benefit.

Now, I mentioned my son was working in Canada. I have said this before in this Assembly: in Canada, they are very generous to their citizens if you stay and work in Canada. But if you choose post-grad to go off and find your fortune elsewhere, then suddenly, the Canadian state wants something back and it sends, if there is any student debt or anything of that nature involved, a bill to the individual and says, 'Right, you have chosen not to contribute to our GDP so we would like something back in return.'

So I return to my substantive point: I can envisage a scenario where 200 – and Deputy Roffey is going to hate me for saying this, but I did say at the start, this is social engineering on a level that most people would not want or we may not even be allowed to undertake – of the *right* people is infinitely preferable to 300 which includes many of the *wrong*. Now, this is the sort of debate I feel we need to have. We need to delve into some of these more uncomfortable issues.

I now move to occupancy. Again, I have said in this Assembly before, one of the reasons we have the housing crisis we have today is the number of people who now live on their own: it has risen dramatically. If you have a system where you encourage multiple occupancy, the housing statistics look an awful lot better. Again, 25-somethings are more inclined to live in that type of environment than others. It may be because they have come from halls of residence at university or simply because they want more money in their pocket to enjoy themselves.

These issues are highly complex and there are many different layers, but it is why I am not particularly hung up on a particular number. However, because I know how reluctant this Assembly has been in my 23 years to use sticks as well as carrots, we will only use the carrot; and as a consequence, the number will need to be 300 or possibly even more because it is marginally the lesser of two evils. But the more targeted we are, the more scientific we are, the harder we make it for people to just be able to take our generosity and then move on elsewhere, the better we will be. It is time, I think, to think much smarter about both our immigration and our emigration in order to ensure a far more productive and constant population.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** That was actually an extremely interesting and thought-provoking speech from Deputy Trott. He mentions his 23 years. I am sometimes called – I think rather erroneously – Father of the House; I am neither a father, nor do I behave like one (*Laughter*) – nor are we the House, really; we are more of a parliamentary Assembly.

Moving on from that: two Members predate me who are sitting still in the Chamber: Deputy Ferbrache and Deputy Roffey, the two Peters. *The Peter Principle* – I remember that was a show on Radio Guernsey for a while. They will recall the kind of debate that Deputy Vermeulen spoke about, when you used to have these – horrendous, really – population debates in the Chamber on housing laws. I recall – in fact, that was my very first introduction to the States as a member of the Public Gallery as a college boy in 1980 – when the then States were going through a revision of housing codes and I was not sure what category I would fit into because I was a child of Open Market people and all the rest of it.

So it has got a lot of form. And I can imagine Deputy Vermeulen saw it as a bit of a horror show that on the day of the debate, when he was a hard-working hotelier and businessman, out of the blue, Deputies and other States' Members of the era would come up with loads and loads of permutations – playing with the Laws, arguably, and creating difficult consequences. I have to say, on occasion in the last decade – I was not there as a Member for those early debates – I did actually vote against elements of the Population Management Regime because I thought they were both unfair and they would not work. Philosophically, I agree with what Deputy Ferbrache says: we live in a different era of human rights and so on.

I could see even at that time that in replacing a housing law system – which is fundamentally based on living in beds, in a way – to one that was based upon residential licences had issues. I believe that one consequence from that – Brexit and other factors have played a role as well – has been the escalation of Local Market rents and for a while, a relative plateauing of Open Market situations. Because we made it harder for Open Market people to be on the Island, we started restraining the market more, but at the same time, restructured the licensing system for the Local Market – which gave some people, potentially, more rights and the ability for Open Market short-term hospitality and other workers to move into the Local Market – we created inflation pressure in that sector, which has not helped any of us – including, I am sure, the hospitality sector, who had to pay more. Deputy Vermeulen accurately describes himself as a 'pro-business' Deputy; I do not want to be seen as an 'anti-business' Deputy, despite what people might think. And I do equate myself with the world of business.

I am, I must admit, very sympathetic to the amendment that Deputy Roffey and Deputy de Sausmarez have put across but I probably will not vote for it because I think – I do not want to get side-tracked into the 'Ponzi scheme'. When I heard about this, I thought, 'Oh, I could do with a Ponzi scheme because it might be nice to make some money in it.' (*Laughter*) But when I looked into it, my colleagues who knew more than me – it actually is a rude phrase, in a way, and it does not, I think, accurately define where we are at. But it is an expression that goes back to an apparent swindler who lived in Italy, Canada, Brazil, and the United States of America in the early years of the last century. He ended up, I am afraid, doing jail time, but for a while, he was a super-millionaire because he encouraged people to invest in schemes that did not have the strongest foundations and certainly would not pass muster at the GFSC or any Guernsey institution. So there is a real character called Mr Ponzi; he had many other aliases as well, but that is going off the point.

I do not think we are quite in that territory, here, because there are changing demographics. I think the point that Deputy Ferbrache, Deputy Matthews, and Deputy Trott have made is, we do not ever again just want to increase our population willy-nilly; we want it to stabilise or increase at the right length with the right mix of people and skills. And I entirely agree with Deputy Ferbrache and Deputy Prow, etc., that this policy letter is not just about numbers; it is about supply-side issues such as enabling planning, enabling property – maybe higher-rise – definitely investing money in



skills – and maybe Deputy Dudley-Owen or Deputy Murray will add some meat to that at some point in the debate, about actually empowering the workforce.

Where I do agree with Deputy Roffey and Deputy de Sausmarez is, they have hit on two very important points that I cannot disagree with. And they have been representing me, of course, on the Population Working Party as I sit on ESS. I would have liked to have sat on it myself, in a way, but they were probably a heated enough group at times. Where I do agree with them is, we definitely need to maximise participation in our workforce from, perhaps, those with disabilities; those of riper, maturer years; people – not necessarily just women, but men too – who are involved with childcare. I think we do need more state investment in childcare and more tax allowances employed. We went backwards a few years ago when the States started pulling out of facilities, I remember: Beau Séjour and Health & Social Care.

And we need to maximise people's value. One of my colleagues, even a few hours ago, socially, who knows more about employment and training than I do, said, 'Actually, if we invested more in training and education and aspirations and improving people's skills in the workplace, not just at the highest levels or the lowest levels but across the spectrum, we would be growing economically as well as resolving some of these population problems. So I entirely agree with the 'women in the workplace' and the participation arguments and maximising the workforce and thinking smarter, and actually getting some of the people we were talking about in terms of outlawing discrimination in the last session really achieving their potential, rather than just relying on recruiting people from outside.

But where I think the Ponzi analogy breaks down – other Members might have a different view in here – is, I think, not only did Deputy Ferbrache remind us of the population decline that we had for a bit in the 1970s and then again in the 1990s and the fact that if you take Alderney – Alderney is a wonderful place. I am always impressed, always have been for the last 30 years, by how they managed to run a harbour, an airport, a police station, a parliament, an ambulance service – you name it – on a very small population. But it is a fact that half of Alderney's population is of a certain age and that limits their potential a bit. We have to ensure that we are a place of choice for younger people – not just Deputy Trott's returning children, but people who come to the Island voluntarily from across the world.

And I think one of the areas where we have to compare ourselves with Jersey: Deputy Brouard made a very strong argument that Jersey got nowhere with its population increase because all it did was increase its population but not its economic growth. Yes. The figures, to a degree, suggest that. I would also say that they, unlike us, have been less successful in managing their unemployment and they have seen more structural unemployment too – and perhaps, more differences in wealth. So I go along with all of that.

But one thing Jersey has as an advantage over us is, they have a higher critical mass. Deputy Inder and others would agree that is vital for transportation services, air and sea, for leisure services, for certain kinds of businesses, for certain kinds of restaurant options, certain kinds of construction costs, all specialities. My fear is that Guernsey runs the risk of becoming less competitive. I know not everybody likes chain stores and chain restaurants but they have had a habit of coming to Guernsey and disappearing or not coming to Guernsey but going elsewhere. And I think that is because we have not had quite the right population mix.

One thing Economic Development has been really interested in this term – but we still have not really seen much in the way of practical, good results – has been improving the retail offer. Now, I think that if you want to see a more vigorous St Peter Port, perhaps with younger people living there, and St Sampson's too and other social centres, you need to have, as Deputy Matthews and others have said, the demographic mix.

Our housing laws, for many years, have encouraged the middle-aged senior professional who manages to get the long licence, who comes at the age of 45, 50 and is still hopefully here at 90 or 95, having brought a whole range of relatives – that is great – and living in the bungalow rather than in student digs. That enriches our community and they often do amazing public service. But that is not quite the profile we want to have in many respects. We want the younger digital nomads,

we want the entrepreneurs, we want people who are able to form their own businesses. So not only does population management need to reflect that, but we need to ensure that we have an open policy.

I never understand these debates, in many ways. As I say, I was talking about my life as Father of the House; when I started there was a Population & Migration Committee and there used to be horrendous arguments as to who would sit on it and whether it was left-leaning or right-leaning or 'traditional-leaning' or whatever. And I was always really on the side of the environment not being under too much strain – we will probably hear a lot about that during the course of this debate.

But I never understood – because we are not China, nor do we want to be; we are not Iran, nor do we want to be; or Hong Kong, for that matter – how we can control the population. Deputy Brouard put in a political hand grenade just now – he was so right – that there are thousands and thousands of people out there, people from Guernsey lineage, quite rightly, going back some centuries who already have the right to return to Guernsey. They may well have the money from selling properties in what, until recently, has been a very buoyant UK and international property situation. They could come back tomorrow, they could be 55, 65, 75 and they would be welcomed in our community on many levels but they would not be economically generating. I am sure there are people who are 70 or 80 who will work in bars in St Peter Port; in fact, I know people who have done that in Alderney as well, so we should not be ageist.

But we already have no way of controlling their return. We have no way of controlling, really, how long people live. We do not have, sensibly, a way of controlling whether people can bring their elderly relatives over; we could stop it but it would not be humane or right. We have no way of controlling how many babies people have at whatever age, whether they are older parents or younger parents. And we have no way of controlling – unless we are very instrumental, as Deputy Trott implied – whether we can encourage graduates back or not. I believe we do export many of our brightest people but we also recruit people from around the world to settle here, so it cuts both ways.

I just wonder: what are the instruments, especially now we no longer have a housing authority with five Deputies sitting on it, for increasing the numbers? Whether we vote for 200 or 300 or 400, what will change in the next few years that would mean that Johnny Smith or Alice Brown can settle in Guernsey, or not settle but could at the moment? I actually want to know the mechanism of how any of this works.

But as I say, despite wanting many of the improvements in society Deputy Roffey and Deputy de Sausmarez do, on balance, I am likely to vote for the 300.

**Deputy Queripel:** Sir, I rise to invoke Rule 26(1), please.

**The Bailiff:** Those Members who wish to speak on this amendment, numbered 5, in debate on it, stand in your places. Is it still your wish, Deputy Queripel, to move a motion pursuant to Rule 26(1)?

**Deputy Queripel:** It certainly is, sir.

**The Bailiff:** In that case, Members of the States, I will put to you the motion that debate on this amendment, numbered 5, should be brought to a close, subject to the usual winding-up – which means we would hear from the President of the Committee and then the proposer of the amendment – without any other contributions in the meantime. Those in favour; those against.

*Members voted Contre.*

**The Bailiff:** I will declare that lost.

**Deputy Queripel:** A recorded vote, sir, please.

**The Bailiff:** In that case, Greffier, have we got a Proposition available?

**The States' Greffier:** Yes.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Queripel is invoking his entitlement to ask for a recorded vote and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

There was a recorded vote.

*Not carried – Pour 17, Contre 17, Ne vote pas 1, Absent 4, Did not vote 1*

10

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	ABSENT	DID NOT VOTE
Deputy Aldwell	Deputy Blin	Deputy Prow	Deputy Burford	Deputy Falla
Deputy de Lisle	Deputy Brouard		Deputy Bury	
Deputy Dyke	Deputy Cameron		Deputy Le Tocq	
Deputy Ferbrache	Deputy de Sausmarez		Deputy St Pier	
Deputy Haskins	Deputy Dudley-Owen			
Deputy Helyar	Deputy Fairclough			
Deputy Inder	Deputy Gabriel			
Deputy Le Tissier	Deputy Gollop			
Deputy Mahoney	Deputy Kazantseva-Miller			
Deputy McKenna	Deputy Leadbeater			
Deputy Meerveld	Deputy Matthews			
Deputy Moakes	Alderney Rep. Roberts			
Deputy Murray	Deputy Roffey			
Deputy Oliver	Alderney Rep. Snowdon			
Deputy Parkinson	Deputy Soulsby			
Deputy Queripel	Deputy Taylor			
Deputy Vermeulen	Deputy Trott			

**The Bailiff:** On the motion pursuant to Rule 26(1), there voted in favour 17 Members, against 17 Members, 1 abstention, 1 Member who is marked present but was not voting, there are now 4 Members who are absent. Because there is an equality of votes, I will declare the motion lost.  
Deputy Dudley-Owen.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you, sir. I will stand up before we get another guillotine.

There are various points that I want to make around this debate. It is really very interesting but it is also very contentious. It is a sensitive matter and I actually think that there is no easy answer to this particular conundrum. I have got a great deal of sympathy with the lower rate of population but I also understand the assumptions that have led to the higher population rate being proposed.

I sat on the Review board as much as I could; ill health prevented me on some occasions and clashes of diaries prevented the Education Committee from being represented on some occasions as well, which was a bit frustrating. But as far as I am aware – just to point out for Deputy Gollop's benefit, really, and to let other Members know – it was extremely well-chaired by Deputy Prow and as far as I witnessed, absolutely no heated moments whatsoever. Lots of good conversation but no heated moments. So I would like to reassure him that it was all very congenial.

The few points that I do want to make: data collection is always something that we are really bad at doing in the States of Guernsey. For too long, we coasted. It was 'all going very well, thank you very much, and we're not going to bother taking the time or investment to collect any data around that because we're doing well'. And now we are coming to a stage – probably 10, 15 years after realising that actually, things are going to get a little bit sticky based on the data that we did collect – when actually, we have got an awful lot of catching-up to do. One area that I keep harping on about which is related to Proposition 6, which is – bear with me:

To direct the Committee for Employment & Social Security to consider any recommendations in the areas of workforce participation where contributions and benefits may assist future outcomes, and to return to the States with any proposals before the end of 2023.

In relation to that particular Proposition in the policy letter, something we have had a complete lack of – it is about productivity – is how productive are we as a population in terms of the workforce? Do people actually contribute an awful lot of value for the GDP that we receive? And we just do not know because we do not collect the hours that people work.

And I have said this quite often before – when I sat on Economic Development, I have said it standing up in the States here before, I have said it for the benefit of Members at the time of the Committee for Employment & Social Security – why are we not doing what I see as quite a simple fix to this? For the moment, it could be a little bit of an unsophisticated fix: we run something brilliant called Returns Creator as the States where employers on a quarterly basis put in their wages for their staff members. Within that, we could add a field to ask not only the value of that work that they have done, but actually how many hours that they did for that work. And it is not difficult to do. It would make a difference to the data that we capture.

Yes, I appreciate not every single employer in the Island uses it directly, but actually, they end up using it indirectly through payroll services and payroll services, on behalf of those bigger employers, could actually feed that information in. I think we should be doing that pretty quickly and I just cannot understand why we have not done it.

So I think, in terms of productivity, that obviously is in the hands of ESS and I do look forward to that information coming through. It has prevented us in a lot of the Skills work that we have done. I chaired Skills for quite some time last term; that baton has been handed over in my Committee to Deputy Haskins, who has ably co-chaired with Deputy Kazantseva-Miller. They are developing the Human Capital Plan from both our Committees. But again, they have highlighted the lack of usable data, which is just crazy. We should be the keepers of that data and we just really hamstring ourselves. Unless we have credible, hard data to make informed decisions about, then quite frankly, we might as well all go home.

The other point that I wanted to make was in relation to this – this is something that we have heard a lot in this particular debate: women and their workforce participation. ‘Women in the workforce’ participation. Not all women want to participate in the workforce! Honestly, they do not! Because they are doing a really important job. They are either looking after their children or they are caring for other valued members of their family – or they simply do not want to participate at that particular time.

I will give way to Deputy de Sausmarez.

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** I thank Deputy Dudley-Owen for giving way.

It is an issue that she and I have discussed on many occasions. She knows that I definitely do not disagree with the point she is making, but I am sure she would acknowledge that in Guernsey, where it is so difficult to access affordable childcare, in particular, there are many women, in particular – parents more generally, but especially women – who are not able to work to the degree that they would choose to otherwise do irrespective of any caring responsibilities that they might want to undertake.

I would also like to emphasise that that is not and should not be seen as primarily ‘women’s work’. Part of this is about talking about sharing parental responsibilities.

Thank you.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Deputy de Sausmarez does raise good points there, but also a lot of those are anecdotal because we do not actually have the evidence there, the hard evidence. The PwC workforce report did go some way towards evidencing that but we do need that proper hard evidence from Government to be able – if PwC is going to be the ‘consultant.com’ that we use to do the work for us, fine, but there need to be more parameters fed into that as well. This is about choice. And also, a lot of women do want to look after their own children because of course, they

have worked quite hard to have them – especially when birth rates are reducing, especially when women are waiting longer, there are increased fertility issues when you wait longer, and women do actually want to take time out of the workforce to look after their own kids; I certainly did. I had waited long to have my kids, three kids, and quite frankly, they are a bit of a handful at that age to look after, aren't they? I wanted to have that privilege to do that myself. I was very lucky that I had a large family that assisted me; not everybody has that, not everybody has the financial means. But it does mean tightening your belt, it really does.

Also, there are other things that are in the way of women going back to work, not just around that. Deputy de Sausmarez does raise those points but I think we have to look at this in the round. Not everybody wants to participate because they are doing equally, or probably *more*, valuable work looking after their family. Of course, we do have the social issues on the other side of employing people to look after our children and we do talk about absenteeism and presentee-ism in parents and parents doing a good job and being bonded to those children rather than being put into a workforce situation on a full-time basis. I think we have got to weigh up what we actually want from our society. It is not just an easy fix.

We of course want to prioritise local workforce participation, but also, the local workforce as being our first choice, I think, where, especially, they have the capability – i.e., the skills, the knowledge, but also the capacity to be able to work. In addition, where we do not have that local workforce capability, we absolutely have to bring in other people to do jobs for us and it has ever been thus. I think that that is the right thing to do. But obviously, that has to be balanced with what our infrastructure needs are; this is the crux of the argument, isn't it?

Looking at PEAP, I think that this is a very misunderstood part of the policy letter, the Population Employment Advisory Panel. It has long been the case within this particular Chamber that there have been some myths that have abounded around population management because it was really not a very popular move when we discussed this and approved the policy proposals which were much amended from when they were brought. The Population Employment Advisory Panel was actually, I thought, a really good idea in principle. I think that it is going to be strengthened and obviously, with the Employment Permit Policy, it looks as if it could really be made to work very well.

But let's actually look at what it does. It is a panel of – or it *had been* a panel of – industry representatives where industry or sectors could go and ask for particular roles to be put on the list depending on skills that were needed. I had one construction industry leader who came to me and said, 'We need carpenters, we need shutterers. We need to remove the Population Law because we cannot get shutterers in for concrete.' I said, 'Why would we need to switch off the Population and Immigration Law just to get in shutterers?' and that person did not realise that actually, they could feed into the construction industry lead for the Population Employment Advisory Panel, ask for shutterers to be put on that list, and get a permit for those particular people who needed to come in. Within a couple of weeks, that person had made an approach to the Population Officer, had put the role on the list, and was able to import that skill that we needed that we did not have in the Island.

And there we go, fantastic! Government-held data, we have got an increase in that; the employer has got people whom they need coming in for the period of time that they are needed; and everyone is happy. It did not require the Population Management Law to be switched off. And that is a really interesting point. Many of this Assembly are new and actually, in the previous Assembly, this legislation was unpopular to the point that senior Members wanted this legislation switched off. It was a constant cry: 'Switch it off!' Members of Policy & Resources were constantly, the former Chief Minister was constantly calling for this Law to be switched off. Why? I could not understand it.

This Population Law is complex because it rolls in Open Market, it rolls in immigration, it rolls in skills, it rolls in birth-right. It is necessarily complex to mop up a whole load of legislative positions in Guernsey that had evolved over time and needed clarification and needed bringing up-to-date and in line with human rights and what we really needed in the Island. And I think that it is necessarily complex; but wow, what a job the previous Home Affairs did, and also the current Home

Affairs did, inheriting the review position – because I do query whether actually, a lot of this could have been done within Committee without it having to come to the States for a big debate and whether we have not actually waded in like a bit of a bull in a china shop onto Deputy Prow's Committee and brought it in here just for the sake of having a debate to satisfy naysayers in the previous States. So I am pleased that he has been able to do that, along with his Committee, in such a congenial and generous manner, to be honest.

I think that I need to say a couple of things about education in this, because of course, that will be a concern. Whether it is 200 net migration or 300 net migration, there is going to be a population increase under this policy and people will be saying, 'Have the schools got capacity?' Yes, they do, because obviously, after the population bulge that we spoke a lot about last year – after 2030, there will be a reduction in the school-age population and there will be spaces within our schools; but obviously, within primary, that will be swept up in the next term with the Primary Review.

Do not worry, Deputy Vermeulen – I see you looking at your watch – I will wrap up soon.  
(Laughter)

One thing that Members should actually be cognisant of is that with emigration, with people possibly coming in from outside the Common Travel Area, outside of English-speaking countries, there is going to be an increase in English as an additional language spoken that needs to be met within our schools. Little people coming into our schools who speak English as a second language or not at all at that time that they arrive, that will take additional resource. We are actually seeing that increasing in our schools, interestingly, already. I think within one of our Town schools, we have 21 languages spoken within one of our schools, which is amazing! I find that really exciting, actually. As a linguist myself, I find that absolutely incredible. Deputy Inder is querying that but I do have a degree in Japanese so I think that that almost qualifies me to say that I am a little bit of a linguist; I am interested in languages, let's put it that way. I think that that is a really amazing fact.

But it does take additional resources because we have to bring those children on from having English as a second language to a degree of fluency in order to access their learning. That does take additional resource and capacity but then that does flip over onto the other side. Many linguists within the Chamber will know – Deputy Blin in addition, being a native French speaker, will know, actually, that – if you speak more than one or two languages, then your capacity to problem-solve – it opens up a whole load of opportunities for accessing learning later on. So actually, whilst that can be a draw on resources initially, we know that it is an additional benefit for those children later on. But I think that that is a point worth pointing out for the Assembly.

Now, just in terms of a final point Deputy Gollop asked about: skills. I am not going to talk too much about this because I spoke an awful lot about this last year and I do not think that we need to really go over the need for upskilling, for me to dig in deep to this particular area. I am absolutely sure, as eggs are eggs, that Deputy Haskins and Deputy Kazantseva-Miller will be covering this later on and they have been working very closely on these matters as representatives for their respective Committees around developing the human capital element of policy – which necessarily requires our population to have enhanced skills and to have better knowledge in order to be more valuable in the workplace. The more valuable they are in the workplace, hopefully, the more productive they can be and the more value we can secure from those individuals if they are wanting to participate in the workforce – and we do want people to be participating in the community.

But whether they are raising children, whether they are caring for members of their family, whether they are working, or whether they have just taken an early retirement and are still contributing to the economy, I think that we have got to be very careful about the messaging that we give out from this Assembly about workforce participation and making people feel guilty about not participating at this current time if they have got a good reason for not doing so.

Thank you very much.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Blin.

**Deputy Blin:** Thank you, sir.

I was not intending to speak on this, but actually, having listened to a very varied interesting debate, I would like to almost, first of all, thank Deputy Prow and his team for having put together this whole policy letter. I think it is very timely, I think it is very efficient, I think it covers a lot of the work that is required. And given the fact that on top of that, they have made adjustments on STEP – or 'S-TEP' – and MTEP, they are really thinking about the future.

I would like to point that I too, like other Deputies, have professed an interest in business. This is all about market force-led – we are a small Island community full of very strong businesses wanting to get on. The Population Management Law from 2017 I think is one of the best things we have seen for a long time because now we can actually know that all jobs, basically all opportunities, are led by the job title. If that job title is on policy, there is an opportunity. Now, we are talking about the discussion in the amendment of 200+ or 300+. In effect, it does not really make that much difference.

However, I would like to point out – Deputy Trott is not in the room right now – I was particularly impassioned by his speech because his was talking about the detail: getting it right, getting the right type of person, and everything else. My point I would like to make – through you, sir – is for all the Presidents of the Committees to bear this in mind as they continue the good work. I will not be supporting the amendment but I have been very interested to hear the debate. I will be hoping that in the sum-up, Deputy Prow will talk about those specific actions they can take to ensure that the voices such as Deputy Trott asking for this to be looked into are looked into in that way.

That leads to things like – there were some very interesting points from Deputy de Sausmarez and Deputy Ferbrache when we talked about childcare. We all know that actually, within this growth, we also have to try to maximise the working population. Now, we all know that a cost of between £1,000 and £2,000 a month if you have one or two children in childcare – and we also know that balance does not work because if you do not quite have enough, you end up actually working for childcare, not for that. I have been contacted by not only an association of childcare, but also various schools, who are now losing 15% to 30% of their staff with people going into other jobs – whether in finance, etc. They cannot supply. It is clear that if there is going to be a part solution, referring to Deputy de Sausmarez's aspect on childcare, it would be good if we did find a way to reduce costs of childcare so we can get the working population back, but that is a separate issue to be looked at.

But when we come to looking at the in-policy opportunities within these employment permits, I really do hope that the President of the Committee will consider, like in some other countries, whether we vary those permits. I know that it was, again, spoken by Deputy Trott that 25+ qualified accountants is a great thing. But actually, hard workers are skilled workers. We need all of those elements. We cannot just pick and choose the ones that are going to give us the best return.

I will give you a little slight example of something everyone saw recently: the closure of one of the most established restaurants in Guernsey, Le Petit Bistro, and their places there. I look at that and I think: I remember the owners of that when they were bar staff and restaurant staff, and actually, they turned into one of the most well-known owners. And that did not happen over three or four years, but over decades. They then become strong parts of the business community.

So it is about productivity, skills. Leave it to market forces. We as Government should be here to give them that support and actually leave it. Those market forces are left to the businesses, the growth, the opportunities they have. We should be finding ways to allow the businesses to unleash their potential and grow according to what they need. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I will also refer to the point of Deputy Dudley-Owen – and actually, also, Deputy Ferbrache – on the very cosmopolitan Island, cosmopolitan workforce, and the potential we have got here. But it is the same businesses who are going to create those opportunities for the Island.

In effect, my summing-up is that I will not be supporting this amendment but I do appreciate all the information shared and debated here. I will not be speaking on the other amendments because I am going to give full support to the policy letter from Home Affairs, from Deputy Prow and his team, and allow them to get on and finish this job. And I would like to hear from them that they will

actually take into account a lot of the words shared, particularly Deputy Trott's one on getting that balance right.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you, sir.

I am just going to be really quick. Whenever I look at an amendment, I always think, 'What's it actually going to achieve?' In this amendment, I do not think it is going to achieve a lot because within the policy letter, throughout it, it says 300 people is not 'a target nor a cap'. Therefore, 200 people – it could end up being 300. This is just completely academic. It could be 300, it could be 350. There is no – I am not giving way any more because I think this debate is coming to an end. I just think we need to actually make a decision on this and whatever the decision, really, it could be 300, it could be 200 whichever way you go, whether you vote for this or whether you do not vote for this. So can we just get on and vote one way or the other?

**A Member:** Hear, hear.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Soulsby.

Deputy Soulsby: Thank you, sir.

I do not know if there are any keyboard warriors in this room. Those of us who look at Twitter occasionally see there are certain people who like to retweet certain other tweets. Deputy St Pier is not here today, he quite likes doing this: basically, retweeting something and then putting an arrow down and saying 'This'.

Now actually, when I heard Deputy Roffey in his opening speech for the amendment, I wanted to go 'This'. I thought his speech absolutely nailed exactly all the issues that we have got here, exactly why 300 does not make any more sense than, possibly, 200. I absolutely agree with him in terms of the direction people think they are going but not necessarily will end up going; I know that sounds a bit strange to say that but I think the whole thing has been strange. Deputy Oliver standing up, saying, 'It doesn't really mean anything!' If it does not mean anything, why are people getting heated up about this at all? It does mean something and I will speak about that in a second.

Deputy Roffey really summed it up: he is saying we need to think differently and work differently. But what I could not get from this policy letter was any indication that that is what we are thinking about doing. It is basically, 'Let's do the same thing we have been doing over and over again and that means that we need 300 more people.' That is fine. I tend to disagree with that because I think we do actually need to start thinking differently – which goes back to the comment that I did make at a Scrutiny Management meeting. It was not something like I went to the *Guernsey Press* and said, 'Don't you think this is a Ponzi scheme? How terrible!' I was asked as part of a question from P&R at the Scrutiny Management hearing, as I say, from Deputy Burford saying, 'Do you think this is – how can we ever get anywhere if we have more and more people? How are we going to get round this with more and more housing?' And that was my response.

Actually, I am disappointed with the comments that have been made by Deputies Prow and Vermeulen and others – but especially, Deputy Ferbrache, who was actually sat next to me when I said it. I did not attack the work of Home Affairs at all. The policy letter is written very well, I can understand how they came to their conclusion, and I think a lot of the Propositions make a lot of sense. But I absolutely do think in terms of 'Bringing more and more people means more and more things – we have to bring more and more people in so they have got more money, we can spend more on more and more people and then we have to spend more and more on the services to keep more and more people.' That is great until it stops. That is the whole point, that is the connection to a Ponzi scheme: it is all great when the money is coming in and you can get more and more people and 'investors', in inverted commas, but it is not very good when that all stops and you



cannot do that. It is all about being able to get the jobs to enable those people to come in – and I will speak about that more in a minute.

Now, Jersey has been mentioned. We have seen Jersey went for growth, it went for more and more people. If you believe in GDP – and I have got a lot of question marks over the use of GDP, actually – in terms of GDP per capita, Jersey's GDP per capita has gone down as its population has increased.

It is not just me that is saying 'More and more people require more and more infrastructure, more roads, housing;' it is actually in the policy letter! It is not as if I am not saying something that is not understood. The point is, it is not absolutely covering how we deal with it; that is the next step. We are saying, 'Our target should be 300 people but we have got no idea how that is going to impact on the Island at all.' For me, I think, before we say, 'Right, we are going to want more and more – 300 – people,' we should actually be thinking about what we need to do in terms of our infrastructure requirements.

That is my reasoning for why I am not happy with the 300+. But it is all theoretical anyway. It will be down to whether we can get people here and we have got the jobs for them. I struggle, actually, with the phrase 'up to 300+'; it is either 'up to 300' or it is '300+'. How can you have 'up to 300+'? That is probably the accountant in me finding it strange. But then, the amendment is not much better, with '200+', but I am quite happy to acknowledge that they were just following what was in the policy letter on that front.

Deputy de Sausmarez has summed exactly where I am coming from on this: if we are not going to call it a 'Ponzi scheme', the escalator analogy I think works very well. What we are doing is kicking the can down the road with more and more people just to solve the problem that we are in.

Now, if that means that myself, Deputy de Sausmarez, and Deputy Roffey are all considered part of an 'anti-growth coalition', then so be it! I think that we need to be, I think we need new ways of thinking about things at the moment. There is nothing in this policy letter that talks about what sort of society we want. We want more and more people but what does that mean we want for those people? It does not go into the fact that we have got growing inequality on the Island and how we are going to deal with that. It does not really deal with the productivity. I hear Deputy Dudley-Owen and I am glad that Deputy de Sausmarez made the responses she did. The point is, there are a lot of people who would probably like to work and work more but they cannot because of the difficulties that they have experienced at the moment.

So whilst I have some sympathy with Deputy Oliver saying, 'It's pretty meaningless. It's a target anyway. Let's get on with it,' it is in the heart of this policy letter so we need to make a decision on it, and for me, I think it makes more sense to support the amendment put forward by Deputies Roffey and de Sausmarez, and I will be supporting it.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Taylor.

**Deputy Taylor:** Thank you, sir.

I am not entirely sure where to start so I am just going to come with the word 'cosmopolitan' that has been bandied around a few times in this debate. I am not a dictionary dweeb but 'cosmopolitan' does have a double meaning: there is the common definition, which is 'a mix of nationalities coming together in a certain place', but the alternative definition is 'a species or plant which is found all around the world' and I think both would apply. We could have this lovely situation where we have all these nationalities all here in Guernsey – and that would be lovely, I would support that – but we could, in the same direction, have all the Guernsey people spread all around the globe, which I do not think is what we want.

The real issue I have had with this debate is, I have been sitting here wanting to do a 17(6) through most of it because I have struggled to understand whether most people are actually talking about the amendment and the 300 to 200. I have not stood up and I have not given a point of order because I was wondering whether I was getting it wrong, which would not be the first time. But the wording in the amendment is:

In the strategic policy objective [proposition 1] replace 'up to +300' with '+200'

Now, when I was looking at this, I was interpreting that as – there are two paragraphs in Proposition 1. The first paragraph is 'To note that to keep the working age population at its current level, then we would need to increase the population by +300 year-on-year for the next 30 years.' I do not think anyone would argue with that; that is absolute fact.

But the amendment is actually relating to the second part, which I think Deputy Soulsby was speaking to. If I read the preamble:

... to agree that the economic competitiveness ... should be supported through the strategic population objective that: 'The States of Guernsey will assume, for the purpose of planning future infrastructure and service provision, that net migration will average up to +300 per year over the next thirty years.'

I have seen a thumbs-up from Deputy Roffey so I am pleased with that. What we really are discussing with this amendment is the difference between planning for +300 and +200. Why is that important? The reason that is important – I will give you an analogy from own life.

I am building a house at the moment. It is just my wife and I, we have one son, and we are building a three-bedroom house. My mum has said to me, 'You need to add a fourth bedroom! You have to have a fourth bedroom!' and I have stood firm – because I am in my mid-30s, mostly (*Laughter*) – really because I do not need a fourth bedroom. It is absolutely pointless me adding a fourth bedroom if I have no intention – I would love if we could have a second child and then the third bedroom would come into play. That is a sensible bit of expenditure for something that is realistically achievable. But adding a *fourth* bedroom would cause all manner of different issues because the plot would not be big enough for a house with four bedrooms so we would have to take it away from the living space so we would have a lower quality of life; we would probably have bigger bills so we would probably need to work more; and we would not actually be able to afford to have a third child who would necessitate that fourth bedroom.

In the Guernsey context, when we look at the figures – if I come down to – I forgotten the name of the table, but it is 6.16 – it gives us the capacity of the SHLAA, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. And when we look at the '200' figure, on the low density, we would just exceed the amount of land that we already have allocated for housing, but on the smaller figure, we can kind of fit it so we kind of have enough land that we could work with without making major changes, without taking over L'Ancrese Common. Whereas if we go for broke, go for the big 300, it does make quite a difference.

We have some references here in 6.17 talking about 'between 41 and 114 football fields, or 25% and 75% of L'Ancrese Common'. Another way of looking at it: if you go on Google Maps and use the 'Measure' function, you can draw a line from Salerie Corner to Beau Séjour, to the Rocquettes Hotel, then bring it down to Frossard House and then back to the Town front at the Vallette *and then* join it back up to Salerie Corner, and that area is just marginally bigger than the area that is being referred to here. So effectively, the +300 requires us to build St Peter Port again. Bear in mind, St Peter Port is quite a high density but I do not think we have achieved that level of density anywhere else on the Island. That is what this is really about, that is what we are looking to do here.

If we are directing ourselves to plan our infrastructure for that eventuality and it does not come true, it is all a bit of a waste of time, isn't it? We could do a huge amount of infrastructure projects at huge cost with money we do not have and it could all be for nothing.

That brings me back to a point that was made by Deputy Moakes – and it is a very valid point, he is absolutely right to raise this – that we have 1,000 jobs that are currently just sitting there as vacancies. Why aren't they being filled? We are aware that the current housing situation – I think it was pointed out by Deputy Trott but it might not have been – we have enough housing, we have plenty of housing; we just have the wrong people in them. We have lots of housing – there is not much you can do about that. We have people on their own, rattling around in a big house, and then we have families crammed into a tiny little house, and we need to switch that around. So we have the capacity but we have not managed to change it. We actually have capacity in the housing –

I will give way to Deputy Inder.

**Deputy Inder:** Thank you for giving way.

Just briefly, I think the Deputy went through the process of saying he could turn a three-bedroom house into a four-bedroom house. Given that, would he expect Government to come in and tell him to put a fourth bedroom in there? Because actually, the argument from Deputy Taylor was, 'It's my house, I'll do what I want with it.' I am afraid, Deputy Taylor, sometimes – and I think we can all be guilty of it – you cannot ride two horses at the same time. If he does not want Government getting involved with it, there is every potential, given the new order with the wrong people in the wrong houses – Deputy Taylor should put a fourth bedroom in immediately and then evacuate it.

**Deputy Taylor:** Firstly, I am not riding two horses – I could not ride a single horse. *(Laughter)* Secondly, I am not entirely sure what point Deputy Inder is trying to make there. I have highlighted that I am *not* going to add an extra bedroom to my house because it will not be necessary. That is my decision and I am doing that. And I will stick by that because I do not need an extra bedroom. The point I have made – and I have not conflicted myself in any way here – is that we have enough housing and we have enough available bedrooms on the Island to service the population even if it did grow. And I do not know for sure, but I would estimate that we could accommodate those 1,000 people on the Island if those vacancies were filled *if* – and it is a big 'if', and I have not got the solution for how you would do it – the housing was spread properly, and there are mechanisms that could be coming forward some time soon to look at that.

But the real issue for me with those 1,000 vacancies: a lot of them sit in Health, a lot of them sit within Home Affairs with our own mandate – we have got lots of vacancies – and most of these roles already attract short-term, medium-term – it might not be any more – or long-term employment permits. So there is not really a barrier to those vacancies being filled other than some mysterious reason. But they are not being filled. So why would it be that if we suddenly build another St Peter Port, we would suddenly be able to get more people over to fill the vacancies that we already have? I just do not think it will happen.

When this policy letter came before us at Home Affairs, I could not support Proposition 1 just for that reason. I have to support Proposition 2 and I really do urge other people to support Proposition 2. We have got an IDP review coming up. We would have to look not necessarily at this because the timings would not be right; we would have to find more land. Where is that land going to come from? Just a couple of weeks ago, we discussed in this Chamber building on one field next to the Hospital. Blimey! *(Laughter)* There was huge blowback from the community. And here we are, just on the off-chance – I do not doubt that we need 300 a year to sustain the working population; that is indisputable. But whether we would actually do that – I do not think we can. So why should we plan to do that?

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Thank you, sir.

I am thankful to Deputies Roffey and de Sausmarez for bringing this amendment because actually, it forces a conversation to show that the situation is not as simple as it may be put forward in the policy letter. I do really appreciate the hard work in bringing this policy together because it is clearly a very complex piece of work with lots of interdependencies. I am not going to stray into my minor amendment, number 2, which shows that if you just take one little lever and start modelling for that, it straight away changes the numbers. There is just one lever for one age group.

If you do look at the policy paper, just pages 11 and 12 – we have an excellent data analysis team; I absolutely have no doubt of that. They have access to the Guernsey economic model, which is really world-class. But if you just look at the key levers that were modelled for, they are quite simple: net migration and fertility rate. The fertility rate is taken as stable, 1.5, so absolutely no

changes whatsoever for the next 30 years, and then we just model for net migration. That is it. On page 14, we model a little bit for what happens when we start adjusting the pension age, which is going to come through. But that is it. That is the only data I see that this model is being modelled on. Maybe there is something more behind this but it is not in this policy paper. I think any economy is much more complex than that. Any economy will start adjusting behavioural patterns, birth rates will start adjusting. There will be changes. And that is what Deputy Matthews actually said: we are modelling historic trends so we are modelling the future based just on historical data.

We are not modelling in a complex scenario, taking, actually, such changes possible, inflection points into account. At this point, we are looking at what is quite a simplistic way of looking at things, I think. I absolutely take it that we have a declining workforce, we have identified approximately what it is going to look like. I think that the core of this policy paper is that it has found the magic bullet to be migration. And I think this amendment, what it is trying to say, and what future amendments are trying to say: actually, there are more things to this conversation and they will have an effect and some of them will have a material effect.

And also, we then assume that this magic bullet which is the net migration will have this linear projection to solve our declining workforce problem. But you make the assumption that this net migration is cumulative. You are assuming – we have had 300 more people this year – we will have 300 more – so in total, it is 600 more – we will have another 300 more. But migration does not work like that. Especially if you are forcing people only into short employment permits, which are now being reduced to just three years, those 900 people you have got on short-term permits will leave at the end of those three years, so you will have to hire more.

This is where actually, the analogy of the escalator is really valuable. If you only get a majority of people on short employment contracts, they will leave. They will not be adding to the cumulative workforce that is actually what this policy paper is trying to identify. What *will* add to the cumulative workforce stabilisation is people on long-term contracts, absolutely. So allowing people to come on long-term contracts, as many people as possible, is the key to stabilising this growth. There will be much more on that later.

I think there have been some interesting conversations about 'We should be getting the right mix of people,' which I think Deputy Trott started. To me, actually, Deputy Blin's speech was absolutely spot-on. Are we going to be sitting in Government and dictating to business the right mix of people they should be getting? It is completely the other way around.

The only way we are going to get more people is if businesses have jobs to fill; they will only have jobs to fill in because they will have products and services that they sell to the community that the community want to buy; so they will only open new jobs because they have confidence that the community wants to buy those products and services; so they will want to hire people they think will be good and satisfactory for filling those jobs. If they want people in their 20's with low skills because they are cheaper, they will hire them. If they need more senior managers to actually manage teams, they will hire them. The actual mix of people is fundamentally driven by the market forces and the market forces are self-correcting. We can be hypothesising and theorising here about social engineering, but actually, it is really strongly market-driven.

Having said that, public services play a very big role in what kind of people we attract and what jobs we create. Education, law enforcement, health, etc.: I think the majority of permits go to public services. If we want youngsters, let's hire youngsters. Through public services, let's try to social engineer who we hire. I think it is going to be an interesting experiment. Ultimately, we will want to hire the people we need to do the job in that specific moment.

I think, this is, to me, what this amendment is trying to say: that actually, the picture is much more complex; that we have identified one part of the equation, which is 'Let's assume a key objective is strategic workforce stabilisation' – which I think actually, would have been quite – to me, this would have been the strategic objective we should have gone for and which I would truly support: saying, 'Listen, let's have the same workforce by 2050 as we have today.' However, the way to get there I think is more ambiguous and more complex. The work in those areas – whether it is

part of human capital, whether it is technology adoption by businesses for the facility, whether it is workforce policies, whether it is child-friendly policies – that work needs to be developed.

ESS is getting a lot of flack for it. That is not just within their mandate because their mandate is on contribution and unemployment issues. Workforce, productivity, etc. actually is across a lot of Committees' mandates: it is certainly across Education, Economic Development, Policy & Resources – because of the fiscal levers. It is across everyone's mandates. But we have not actually, in a concentrated effort, focused on those areas, and those areas will be, I think – a lot of it will come through the Human Capital Development Plan. But a lot of productivity that we talked about, and automation, which we may talk about, will not potentially come through that; it has to come through enterprise, technology adoption, digital fiscal levers, and so on.

Going back to the amendment: the core of this amendment, I guess, is about the numbers. I think there is a common comprehension. The funny part about the policy paper is that we keep saying it is not a target, it is not a cap, it is not that, and we could hit it or not hit it, miss it, etc. But the key part of it – and I think Deputy Taylor actually illustrated it quite clearly – is that it will force the beginning of strategic planning and it will force especially the planning in relation to housing. It will force changes to, potentially, our Strategic Land Use Plan and the IDP review.

And as we know, once those changes are actually baked in – and they will be in the next couple of years because we have the IDP review that the President today committed we will deliver this political term – once things are baked in the IDP, just because you might happen to have a population review in five years, by the time you want to then feed any possible changes through the strategic work you have done, that is going to be another five to 10 years, potentially, because changing the IDP, changing strategic housing indicators takes a long time. It takes a long time for those things to actually propagate through the system and lead to house-building or developers building more or less or the States doing more. It is actually quite an important figure.

And because, as I said, the 300 is an ambiguous target, I think it is completely ambiguous and risky to rely on net migration as something that will actually completely fill that because there are all these other factors we should be absolutely considering, and we will be considering, that will definitely have an effect on that figure. So that figure is really at that highest level but it will set in motion all of those strategic decisions.

I think it is a real challenge. In terms of the amendment, I am in the mind of actually we are not in the right place to have a figure. I think there is actually further work that needs to be done through Human Capital and other work plans to determine what those other factors are. I think it is premature to set up on a certain figure that is going to start influencing things like strategic housing indicators.

So I think it is quite a difficult situation. I do really appreciate that high-level strategic guidance that we need to maintain the population; I think that is really important. However, I think I would probably disagree on the current projections of how we are going to get there, which is just based on net migration, because I do think there is absolute value in looking into everything else.

So yes, I am not sure – yes, I will be voting for the amendment, actually, but I am not sure I will be voting for some of the main Propositions either because I am not sure we are actually there in terms of data and analysis development.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Haskins.

**Deputy Haskins:** Thank you, sir.

In response to Deputy Kazantseva-Miller – she was querying about the migration – I would just like her to rest assured that this is *net* migration, which does take into consideration overall in and overall out; that is *net*.

Sir, the simple reality is that even without this policy letter, we have averaged at about 400 net migration over the last five years; so personally, I think this amendment is meaningless. Home Affairs have done a lot of work on this and ended up with this figure to address all of the things that we

have just been mentioning to meet our Island's needs. I commend them and I will not vote for this amendment.

**The Bailiff:** As no other Member is rising, I will turn to the President, if he wishes to speak on this amendment.

Deputy Prow.

**Deputy Prow:** Thank you very much, Mr Bailiff.

Deputy Ferbrache will be very pleased to know that he has actually cut down the length of my speech, which was not going to be that long anyway. I will explain why in a second.

I want to start where Deputy Oliver left off and I want Members of the Assembly to hold this, what I am just about to say, in their minds when they come to vote. What we are talking about is a specific amendment to Proposition 1. I just want to remind Members of actually what it says. We have got the figure of +300 a year. It is neither a target nor a cap; it is an assumption. But what is it an assumption about? It is what is required to sustain the Island's workforce at its 2020 level. I will repeat that: it is required to sustain the Island's workforce at its 2020 level. If you go further down to the quote in italics, it says:

This assumption will support the capacity of the Island's workforce so that it remains a desirable and competitive jurisdiction, and will ensure that the Island can meet the needs of the economy with the necessary housing and infrastructure.

That is what Proposition 1 is about.

Now, in the explanatory note of amendment 5, it starts off by saying:

While the correlation between the States aspiration in respect of net migration ...

– a point that Deputy Haskins has just made –

... and what actually happens in this regard may be very weak ...

This reinforces to me that what we are actually talking about is the Island's workforce.

Now, it is quite interesting because in a lot of the speeches, we have been talking about growth. We have been talking about growth in the population, growth in terms of building houses. The growth is to meet a shrinkage. The outcome of the amendment would lead to the Island's population remaining relatively stable in the long term; however, the workforce would shrink by roughly 2,500 people by 2050. The declining workforce formed the basis for the proposal of the assumed 300 net migration, which would stabilise it in the long term.

Deputy Ferbrache in his speech – very helpful, in my view, and he saved me a lot of time – has actually delved into what the report says, the facts and figures and the trends which have been drawn out into the Propositions – not only this Proposition but all the Propositions. The strategic objective proposed through this review was firmly based upon that research and data that was conducted. This was clear. We cannot drive down the need for increased net migration in the short term, nor will work to increase productivity or participation lead to the material improvements in the short to medium term.

And a point that has been drawn out by Deputy Taylor: I think you have also got to bear in mind, around looking at this assumption – it is an *assumption*; it is not a *target*, it is *not a cap*; it is an *assumption* – what we say Proposition 2 is:

To agree that the strategic population objective shall be reviewed by the Committee for Home Affairs, in consultation with stakeholder committees, no later than December 31st, 2027.

What we have – returning to the policy letter, returning to Proposition 1, and returning to the amendment – is looking at the research and evidence that we have in the policy letter and endorsing that and noting it. That is what the Proposition is about.

Now, I think it is a very interesting and important point to have been brought out by Deputy Blin, Deputy Gollop, Deputy Trott, and Deputy Brouard. They are focusing on, perhaps in different ways and different aspects, attracting the right people. That is exactly what the combination of the population management regime and the immigration regime is designed to do.

And that is what the Employment Permit Policy, which we refer to as the EPP, that is exactly what it does. It is about going back to the demands on the workforce. It is looking at job roles where there are vacancies at this moment in time that we cannot fill; then it uses the mechanisms and the levers that exist in Population Management, which is an entirely flexible and useful tool. If you look at appendix 2 of the report, it already demonstrates how these tools have been used – and Deputy Blin pretty powerfully drew this out – how that policy can be changed, will be changed in the future, to meet those demands. So of the 250 roles where we have identified skill shortages or labour shortages, if they are no longer – if we can fill those roles in other ways, they will diminish themselves because that is the mechanism that we are lucky to have.

Jersey has been mentioned. Jersey does not have a population management regime. They have an ‘undertakings law’ but that does not bite in the same way as population management. We have a tool in the box, a lever that you can use to fill the workforce where you need to or diminish it. We talk in terms of an escalator, but that escalator is, to some degree, run around the EPP. The escalator can be stopped, it could even be reversed. And as I have already mentioned, there is a reviewing mechanism built into this if Proposition 2 is successful.

Moving on to Deputy Soulsby, she talks about thinking differently, and that is fine, that is absolutely fine. We have sat through a review process with all the participants; I will not go over who they are again, we know exactly who they were. And I completely agree with her: we need to be thinking differently – but we need to be thinking differently about the strategic interdependencies, we need to be thinking differently about fiscal pressures, we need to be thinking differently around the economy and making us competitive. We need to be thinking differently around pressures on housing and we need to be thinking differently about the demands on public services.

It is okay thinking differently, but what are the answers? In the review, they are not particularly forthcoming. All I am hearing is, ‘I’m disappointed in the review: it didn’t think differently.’ Let’s come up with some ideas, then, because this is a well-researched document with lots of data in it. That is where we are today.

Moving the theme of thinking differently: if you look at it, there are answers in the policy letter. If you look at Propositions 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, it is asking:

To direct the Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure* ... [around] the delivery of general housing units and stock ...

Deputy Taylor spoke about the issues, the conundrums around housing: there is a Proposition that deals with that. A lot of talk has been around human capital development; that is all enshrined in Proposition 5. We move on to Proposition 6, Workforce participation. It is all in here. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller spoke about ‘We need to do more work;’ these are the opportunities and these are the right forums in which to do it. Proposition 7, Access to public services; it is there. Again, the economic substance requirements: there are answers. And that is in the policy letter. Those are choices that we can make if we want to accept them. But there is nothing in this amendment that interferes with that.

So, sir, I urge the Assembly *not* to vote for this amendment.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Finally, I turn to Deputy Roffey, as the proposer of Amendment 5, to reply to the debate, please.

**Deputy Roffey:** Thank you, sir.

I realise when I am on a sticky wicket but I am going to give this my best shot anyway.

I really do thank Deputy Taylor for his insight into what this amendment actually means because there has been a lot of misunderstanding. We have had material put out by Home Affairs themselves saying it is at odds with the objective research that has been carried out; no, it is not. Had I been trying to change the first figure – because Proposition 1 is in two bits: one is a statement, the other is an objective for planning purposes – there might have been some argument in that. This amendment does not do that.

Other people have said, 'What's the point? Whether you have 200 or 300, it will be what it will be.' Yes, but this document is asking us to assume a figure for *planning purposes*. I will read out the beginning of the bit in italics:

The States of Guernsey will assume, for the purpose of planning future infrastructure and service provision, that net migration will average up to +300 ...

All I am saying is, if we take that assumption, some of the things we have to plan for are fairly horrendous, and they are set out – and they are set out *very honestly* – in this policy letter. I am saying it would be better to achieve the sustainable workforce, which is what the first part of 1 is, by a combination of 200 net migration plus striving with every sinew to increase productivity and participation from the people who are living here, because the report makes it clear that the very adverse consequences on things like open land and all the other sorts of infrastructural issues will be a great deal less if we go down that route.

This is not about saying this will be what population growth will be, nor does Deputy Prow pretend that the 300 will be that. It is not about challenging the work that has been done. It is talking about what we should be planning for. And it will have a huge impact on things like the IDP, it will have a huge impact on things that E&I have to do about other areas of our infrastructure.

And if I lose today, fine! I will have made the decision, I will have made the issue be here, on the floor of the Assembly, and the States will decide they want to plan for that infrastructure on the basis of 300. And they will then be very honest; they will not turn around say, 'The north is overdeveloped!' or 'There's too much traffic here!' They will have made that decision, they will have said it is economically necessary, and they will have the courage, every Member of this States who votes against the amendment and for the 300+, to look the people of Guernsey in the eye and say, 'Sorry, mate, this is necessary.' And if that is that, I will respect the outcome. I do not think it is the best route. I think it is best done through a mixture of net migration and greater participation.

I will go through a few of the individual contributors. I think the first was Deputy Inder, who said that I had changed my tack somewhat from not wanting population growth to accepting 200+, but that is not quite right. The 200+ is not population growth of 200+; it is *net migration* of 200+, which will lead to a very modest population growth – but actually, by the end of the period, it will be back to more or less where it is now. But people, of course, Deputy Inder must know, have a right to change to their mind, they absolutely have a right to change their mind. I was just browsing through some previous contributions to social media the other day and I saw one from him on 3rd October 2018 talking about Jersey's 'Go for Growth' strategy and saying, 'Jersey is one big Ponzi scheme!' (*Laughter*) So people do have the right to change their minds.

On the subject of Ponzi schemes, I was quite amused by Deputy Ferbrache being so appalled by hyperbole in speech because kettles and pots did actually come to mind somewhat there. (*Laughter*) And I can understand absolutely why people have used the term 'Ponzi scheme'. I think it was Clive Ponzi, was it? I cannot remember, I do not have the research facilities here. His scheme, of course, it was an illegal scheme and nobody [*inaudible*] compare it with that; but it was a scheme that required more and more to come in at the bottom in order to maintain a pyramid that sat above. And I think what people are saying is, if you have a strategy for economic sustainability that needs more and more young people coming in at the bottom and then growing older, it, in some ways, has parallels with that. I do not think there is anything anybody is saying that is more than that. Nobody is suggesting that Deputy Prow and his scheming cohorts at Home Affairs are trying to do something illegal or anything of the sort.



He said, 'What are ESS doing about these participation rates, then?' I can tell you: I announced, actually, this morning that we were making sure that people living in States' houses could work as much as they wanted to without any threat to their tenancy. Over the last few years, we have really brought down the age at which a work requirement is imposed on parents – I was going to say mothers but I have to be careful: *parents* – for Income Support. It used to be, I think, about 12 at one stage; now it is 5, you are expected to start going back to work. That is encouraging participation. And I will be announcing later on we will be reviewing another policy relating to free pension credits for people who are non-employed and whether that is appropriate any more, so that would help in this respect. And there is a Proposition in here asking us to look at further ways that we can actually use our benefits system to encourage participation and I will fully be supporting that because I think we are a part of that effort. So we are doing our best and we will continue to do so.

Deputy Matthews: young people are leaving in droves. He is right, and that is why we desperately need to ramp up our affordable housing programme. But of course, we are talking here about *net* migration. So it is not as if, 'You need 300 not 200 because lots of people are leaving.' It is not about the *number* of people; it is about the *surplus* of people coming in over the people who are leaving.

Deputy Trott says we have got to get the right people in; it sounds so good in principle, doesn't it, when Deputy Trott gets up and makes this speech? And then a leading bank will interview and they will have three really good candidates, but the standout one happens to have a couple of children and be in their 40s, as opposed to the one who is 28 and single. Are we going to turn around and say, 'Actually, leading bank, you mustn't take the candidate you want because that's not really what we want'?

As long as it is going to brief, I will give way.

**Deputy Trott:** It will be brief, as it always is.

There is a very high probability in that scenario that the banker would privately educate his child, providing minimal impact to the revenue account. Deputy Roffey does not like these sorts of arguments and I completely understand. But what I am saying is, I think we have got to be cuter these days about how we think about some of these problems.

I thank him for giving way.

**Deputy Roffey:** I think I need to start speaking again before I am allowed to give way. (*Laughter*) I give way to Deputy Dudley-Owen.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** I really am very grateful to Deputy Roffey for giving way because Deputy Trott rising has given me an opportunity to speak about the cost of education per child.

I think that Deputy Trott might have been in danger of giving a figure that was a little bit misleading about the average cost of educating a child in Guernsey. Actually, based on 2019 figures, the annual cost per student was £8,125, as opposed to the £12,000 that Deputy Trott arrived at – which I think he does on a regular basis by rolling in the capital cost of the actual buildings. But actually, we know that the regular costs are –

**Deputy Trott:** Am I allowed to correct a 'give way', sir? I suspect I am not.

**The Bailiff:** You cannot.

**Deputy Trott:** What a shame, because that number is complete nonsense. But there we are, sir. (*Laughter*) I understand entirely.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** And I would suggest that this is probably a debate taken off-line, but I did need, for the record, to correct that.

Thank you very much, Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** I used Westminster language this morning and I will do it again now: 'I really need to make some progress,' I think is what they when there are lots of interventions.

However, what I am really trying to say is, yes, in a perfect world, Deputy Trott is absolutely right. You would pick those people who are right for the economy and have the lowest footprint on our services. In the real world, it can be actually quite difficult to achieve exactly that.

Deputy Vermeulen, I think he actually said I would prefer to see no-one come into Guernsey or I had suggested that; no such thing – nor do I want to spend all my time sitting on a bench eating bean jar with Deputy Ferbrache. I actually love diversity. I like the fact that we are more cosmopolitan. I like the cultural melting pot – we are not nearly as culturally melted as some other places, but the fact is that we have a broader set of cultural influences than we used to have.

All I am talking about is numbers, here. And luckily – or otherwise – because our fertility rate is nothing like replacement, we can welcome lots of new and different people to the Island and still keep our net migration rate down to a level which does not put the kinds of huge stretches and strains on our infrastructure that Deputy Taylor rightly highlighted that we will have to do if we go for the sort of growth that we are being asked to plan for – what would actually happen is a totally different thing, maybe.

Deputy Ferbrache's figures, by the way, came from the UN population forecast and I think they are now regarded as very much out-of-date and needing to be redone. I think nearly every other forecast is suggesting that the peak in world population will come quite a lot earlier and the decline will be quite a lot quicker – although I have a lot of respect for the UN by and large.

Deputy Brouard, he is going to go with the report rather than the amendment but with three caveats that are absolutely not going to be satisfied by this report. So if those really are caveats in his mind, I would say he is voting the wrong way. But I do understand: I think he is torn between what he wants for Guernsey and his role as, perhaps, President of Health & Social Care and realising the demand for labour that he has actually seen. I have been there so I have every sympathy with that situation.

Deputy Gollop spoke for a long time but I am not ... (*Laughter*) He waxed lyrical about the old days of 'Pop and Mig' – Population & Migration – that he served on. I do not know whether it was with Eric Gaudion or Dave Barrett or whoever it was, but the problems have not gone away.

Deputy Dudley-Owen – I think this was picked up to some extent – I think there are two main points she has made. She made the point that we need the stats on how many hours people work. She said that is inside ESS' gift; it is not. If it were, we would have got those stats a long time ago. It is inside *Revenue Services'* gift. People always confuse – because Revenue Services are partly in Edward T. Wheadon House that they have got something to do with – whenever people's contributions go wrong, they phone me up and I say, 'It's nothing to do with us any more; it's Revenue Services.'

What Revenue Services have said is, they can provide that data but the best time and the easiest time to do that would be as part of – I do not quite understand why – the Secondary Pensions Project. So everybody, including Deputy Meerveld, take note of that. The quicker we get that, the quicker we will get the stats on how many hours people are working, and you will have to ask the head of Revenue Services why that is the case.

On not all women wanting to work, I absolutely recognise that and get it. Nobody is trying to coerce women who want those special years with their children, if they can afford to do it – and good luck to them if they can – to be able to do that. What I am saying is that we know there is quite a large number of parents – probably 80% women, but let's keep it as 'parents' – who would, if they had access to affordable childcare, like to either work when they do not work or work more hours when they do not.

And Deputy Ferbrache brought a perfectly good point: where is all the labour coming from to staff those childcare facilities? All I can say is, all of those countries that do have almost-universal affordable childcare find there is a significant net gain to their labour market. Yes, there needs to be more people working in the provision of those services, but that is far less than the number of

hours that are released to the workforce outside. In fact, some of the people who might actually provide the workforce in the nurseries and day care facilities are exactly the sort of people who need affordable day care themselves in order to be able to go out and do that.

Deputy Oliver: 'What would this achieve?' I think she is absolutely – I think I started off by saying – and it would impact on her department as much as anything else – this is not about the first section of 1 in normal writing; it is about changing the figure in number 2, which is in italics. We are going to decide today – or tomorrow or Friday, whenever – what figures to plan on the basis of.

Okay, last time I am going to give way. Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you.

I totally agree that it does impinge on my department. But to a large extent, market forces will dictate how many houses are going to be built because of the demand coming in and/or not the demand coming in. You will not have a developer saying, 'Actually, I'm going to go build 300 houses' if they know that the demand is not there.

**Deputy Roffey:** I agree, but we need to do some strategic planning. This is saying that we will strategically plan on the basis of the assumed 300+ net migration. I can perhaps illuminate Deputy Soulsby on this: the 'plus' in this sense is not 'more than'; it is actually 'positive rather than negative', because when you have net migration, say you have 100 net migration – it could be 100– or 100+ depending on whether more people are coming in or going out. That is a rather pedantic point but I thought I would do so anyway. I thank her for her support.

I think, really, I come to an end here. As I say, I think I have picked up the mood music and I am not altogether surprised by it, but I think it was important to have this debate and to have this decision. When we walk out of here, we will be saying that we are going to plan on the basis of a figure of net migration. How much land we want to put aside for housing, how much road-widening we may need to do or new – sorry, I know nobody is going to drive in the future, Deputy de Sausmarez, but I think they will – how much parking provision we ... that is what we are going to be planning on. And I think we are going for a really dystopian vision of Guernsey in the future. I fully respect that I may be in a minority on that – and I do not have to ask for a recorded vote because that always happens these days – but I believe that most people in Guernsey actually are with me, rather than the majority in this Assembly.

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, we now come to the vote on Amendment 5, proposed by Deputy Roffey, seconded by Deputy de Sausmarez, in respect of Proposition 1 in the original Propositions.

Greffier, will you now open the voting, please?

*There was a recorded vote.*

#### *Amendment 5*

*Not carried – Pour 11, Contre 22, Ne vote pas 2, Absent 4, Did not vote 1*

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>
Deputy Cameron	Deputy Aldwell	Alderney Rep. Roberts	Deputy Burford	Deputy Falla
Deputy de Sausmarez	Deputy Blin	Alderney Rep. Snowdon	Deputy Bury	
Deputy Fairclough	Deputy Brouard		Deputy Le Tocq	
Deputy Gabriel	Deputy de Lisle		Deputy St Pier	
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller	Deputy Dudley-Owen			
Deputy Le Tissier	Deputy Dyke			
Deputy Leadbeater	Deputy Ferbrache			
Deputy Meerveld	Deputy Gollop			
Deputy Roffey	Deputy Haskins			
Deputy Soulsby	Deputy Helyar			
Deputy Taylor	Deputy Inder			
	Deputy Mahoney			

Deputy Matthews  
Deputy McKenna  
Deputy Moakes  
Deputy Murray  
Deputy Oliver  
Deputy Parkinson  
Deputy Prow  
Deputy Queripel  
Deputy Trott  
Deputy Vermeulen

**The Bailiff:** The voting in respect of Amendment 5, proposed by Deputy Roffey and seconded by Deputy de Sausmarez, is as follows: there voted Pour 11 Members, Contre 22 Members, there were 2 abstentions, 1 Member is not voting, and there are still the 4 Members who are absent; therefore, I declare Amendment 5 lost.

**The Bailiff:** The next amendment to turn to is numbered 1.  
Deputy de Sausmarez, do you wish to lay Amendment 1?

Deputy de Sausmarez: Yes, please, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Okay, I invite you to do so.

[Amendment 1](#)

*To insert the following proposition:*

4.

1. To direct the Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure* to carry out the work necessary to assess the level of investment and/or resources that will be necessary for the States or States-owned trading assets to invest in infrastructure (including but not limited to road, electricity and water infrastructure) to support the strategic population objective and report its findings to the States in Q2 2023 in order to inform long-term planning, and to direct the Policy & Resources Committee to make available the resources necessary to undertake this work.

Deputy de Sausmarez: Thank you, sir.

I am hoping this will be a shorter debate than the one on the previous amendment. Actually, I think many of the points that were made during that debate, or the debate so far, could actually help illustrate the need for this amendment.

Members will have noted this is being proposed by me and seconded by Deputy Haskins – and indeed, that is on behalf of the Committee *for the Environment & Infrastructure*.

Really, I think it was Deputy Prow who, in replying to the debate on the previous amendment, read out a really critical bit of the strategic population objective, and that is that:

The States of Guernsey will assume ...

– my emphasis here –

... for the purpose of planning future infrastructure and service provision, that net migration will average up to +300 per year over the next thirty years ...

It really is that bit about ‘for the purpose of planning future infrastructure and service provision’. That is what Deputy Oliver touched on, Deputy Taylor went into more detail on, and Deputy Roffey has just been speaking about just now.

I have to say, this amendment came about because when we were looking at the Propositions, there were some directions to various other Committees to do other bits of work, but given that this planning of future infrastructure is so central that it is named specifically and explicitly in the strategic population objective itself, I think we as a Committee, who have in our mandate much of

that infrastructure, thought that it would be useful to bring to the table an amendment which added in a Proposition to specifically direct some work around that to take place.

What the amendment asks Members to agree is:

4.
  - a. To direct the Committee *for the* Environment & Infrastructure to carry out the work necessary to assess the level of investment and/or resources that will be necessary for the States or States-owned trading assets to invest in infrastructure (including but not limited to road, electricity and water infrastructure) to support the strategic population objective and report its findings to the States in Q2 2023 in order to inform long-term planning, and to direct the Policy & Resources Committee to make available the resources necessary to undertake this work.

Really, it bring us back to a bit of a conundrum, which is: as has been drawn out in debate so far and as Deputy Prow rightly drew attention to when he opened on this debate, the +300 objective is neither a target nor a cap; I think everyone appreciates that, that is accurate. But how we plan for a number that is neither a target nor a cap is a bit of a mind-boggler. We have to take the strategic objective at face value and use it as an assumption for the purpose of planning – which brings us back to the point that I think Deputy Taylor articulated very well.

I do not think I have to spend long because I think people understand that a strategic population objective of +300, which will grow our population, will have a significant impact on infrastructure, including – but not limited to – housing, the land required for housing, transport, water, and electricity – and actually, various other aspects of infrastructure as well, but we thought, from our Committee perspective, we needed to draw a bit of a ring around the infrastructure that was directly the responsibility of the States or indirectly through States-owned trading assets.

Deputy Oliver in the previous debate did point out – and I think this is true to say – that it does not really make a difference because it is neither a target nor a cap. But it does make a really fundamental difference to how we can plan for it, and that is what – if we approve later; when we get to the substantive Propositions, if we approve Proposition 1 – we will agree to do: we will agree to plan for that number.

Planning for infrastructure takes some considerable time and some considerable money – as illustrated, in fact, by our current mismatch between housing demand and housing supply. Deputy Haskins, when he spoke in the previous debate, pointed out that we have had a bit of a blip in terms of net inward migration in the last few years. It reversed its gently falling trend and suddenly went into a net plus migration level of around 400. I am surprised to hear that that was over five years – I thought it was more like three. But anyway, needless to say, that sudden influx in population has created a lot of pressure on our housing in particular because it takes time to build more housing and it takes even more time to develop or extend or adapt the infrastructure to support that housing.

I think it is also worth bearing in mind, of course, that irrespective of any net inward migration we agree – and indeed, achieve – we have got this backlog to work through first before we can even start meeting the demand of the increases in population that the strategic objective may or may not drive but that we have to plan for. So time and money are really the things.

Deputy Taylor was quite right to say that this is a real risk. We can plan for it, we can plan and implement that plan accordingly, but because we do not have the levers that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller referred to, and others, in the previous debate, we have got no real way of knowing whether that is going to be a plan that is fulfilled or not. That is a risk that we cannot fully mitigate but we can partially mitigate: we can reduce that risk by better understanding the resources that we are going to need to put in in order to plan around that figure, in order to deliver it.

That is really what this amendment is about: it is about directing the work to give us a better understanding, to allow us to assess the resources that we think we are going to need in order to carry out that objective.

And I think it was Deputy McKenna who made the point this morning: ‘Not to worry: there’s going to be a five-year review.’ As a bit of an aside, my heart gulped at that – to mix my metaphors

horribly – because five years in infrastructure planning terms is nothing. Actually, planning infrastructure is a really long-term thing. It does take time not just to plan, but to actually implement. So actually, if we are going to change our minds in five years, from an infrastructure planning point of view, that is a nightmare.

But anyway really, this is, I hope, a relatively straightforward and sensible amendment that just directs us to do a bit of work that will help inform what will be required to assist us in doing what the strategic population objective asks us to do, which is to plan the future infrastructure and service provision. I hope that the Committee for Home Affairs and the Policy & Resources Committee are minded to support it; I have not had official confirmation of that. If so, then hopefully, we can have a fairly short debate!

Thanks.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Haskins, do you formally second the amendment?

**Deputy Haskins:** Yes, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Thank you very much.  
Deputy Queripel.

**Deputy Queripel:** Sir, this amendment seems to make perfect sense, but I do have a concern. The amendment asks us to agree:

... to direct the Policy & Resources Committee to make available the resources necessary to undertake this work.

Will this mean another member of staff will need to be employed, or a consultant brought in to undertake the work? In asking that question, I am only too aware that 4(1)(d) tells us:

The amendment will have a direct cost but will enable more effective, joined up infrastructure planning which will reduce costs to the taxpayer overall.

I am curious to know what the resource needed is going to actually entail. I am sure E&I must have an idea of how much work is involved and who is going to be needed to undertake that work.  
Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Ferbrache.

**Deputy Ferbrache:** It is a very good point made by Deputy Queripel, but as I said briefly to Deputy de Sausmarez when we discussed her amendment a week or so ago, I am going to support it, I think it makes great sense to support it. What I would anticipate, if the amendment is passed – and I hope it is passed; and I hope there is not a lengthy debate on it, because we do need to look into the infrastructure aspects because how can we do things if we do not have proper infrastructure? – that P&R would be liaising with Environment & Infrastructure to say, 'How do we process it?'

I would urge Members to support the amendment.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Inder.

**Deputy Inder:** Rule 26(1), sir.

**The Bailiff:** Will those Members who wish to speak on Amendment 1 stand in their places, please?

Do you still wish to put a motion pursuant to Rule 26(1), Deputy Inder?

**Deputy Inder:** Yes, sir.

**The Bailiff:** The motion is that debate on this amendment be curtailed subject to the normal winding-up which we are now familiar with: those in favour; those against.

*Members voted Contre.*

**The Bailiff:** I will declare that lost.  
Who wishes to speak?  
Deputy Mahoney.

**Deputy Mahoney:** I suppose I should, really, shouldn't I? (*Laughter*) Actually, it is only going to be very brief so if someone wants to do a Rule 26(1) after that, that would be great! (*Laughter*)

I just had a couple of questions. One of them actually was raised by Deputy Queripel. This whole 4(1)(d), which more and more, we seem to just be saying, 'Yes, it's going to cost more but I don't know how much, or else I do know how much but I'm not going to tell you.' That seems to be slightly odd. If the last two years has taught me anything, it is that certain Committees seem to say, 'We don't have any resource,' 'We don't have any resource,' and, 'We don't have any resource,' and this seems to be a bit of a *carte blanche* to say, 'Now give me money, give me resource because the States has directed you to do so.'

4A, as listed here, to do what Home Affairs are trying to do, would have had to have happened anyway so this is another one of those pointless amendments, (**Two Members:** Hear, hear.) because this was going to happen whatever. I do not see why we need another amendment to tell them to do what they would have had to have done in the first place. We will get policy letters coming through with 28 amendments just saying 'Do what you should have done' at ED, 'Do what you should have done' at Home Affairs,' blah, blah. This just seems to be an amendment for the sake of an amendment and I will not be supporting it. But anyway.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** The amendment, I suppose, is a wish to put on the record.

I was going to say 'Be careful what you wish for, be careful what you vote for,' because although I will support the amendment, there are some issues. For example, it says 'report its findings to the States in Q2 2023'; that is up to the end of June. Again, that is eight months from now. And it says, 'in order to inform long-term planning'. We heard from Deputy Oliver that the Island Development Plan is being prepared by the end of this term but that in itself is an extremely long process. We do need, on occasion, to find a way of –

I will give way to Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Just a point: we do have resources to actually review the IDP.

**Deputy Gollop:** Yes. That is good to know because Members have identified resource shortage as an issue in the past.

But I think my point is that this actually does not mention the Island Development Plan or the Development & Planning Authority, but presumably – Deputy de Sausmarez can reply to this – that is also implicit in E&I's thinking.

My other point, really, is: we have not had the debate on the States' Strategic Housing Indicator yet. The problem with this is it actually might put people off when they see the report and say, 'There are a lot of infrastructure requirements.' But I believe – in a way, like Deputy Mahoney – that many of these infrastructure requirements were inevitable in any case. I think sometimes, we overdo the issue of population in planning for infrastructure, because as I said earlier, not only are there

minimum infrastructure requirements, you need a runway with safety when you have got a population of 50,000 or 100,000.

Remember the days when Guernsey had a booming tourist industry – maybe we will again or it is happening again. I used to think that you could say Guernsey's population was a notional 55,000, say, in the 1970s or 1980s, but at the height of summer, it would have been 10,000 more, maybe, with visitors and workers. So in reality, we needed an infrastructure for a larger population than our notional figure.

So, yes, I want this to happen, but I do not want excessive delays, nor do I want to see misleading uses of population statistics to put infrastructure – (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and indeed, Deputy de Sausmarez is right: we will not need all these new roads because we are going to get behaviour change as well.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

I do agree with Deputy Mahoney that sometimes we find some questionable Propositions in this Assembly – pointless Propositions, some might say. I think of the Key Worker Housing requête and I think one of them was to note that we have a shortage of key worker housing, which is pretty pointless as far as I am concerned. (*Laughter*)

But I do not agree that this one is, I do not think this is, for the reason that Deputy Mahoney points out, for the resource reason, because E&I have not got resources, like no Committee has excess resources, so this specifically gives them the resources to be able to do this piece of work, so I will be supporting it.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dyke.

**Deputy Dyke:** Thank you, sir.

I am not quite sure about this proposal. It spells out, in particular, to refer to 'electricity and water infrastructure'; I guess Guernsey Electricity and Guernsey Water are reviewing that themselves, not through E&I as a matter of course. I guess they are going to have to work out where each cable and main goes when they know where some of these extra houses are going. So that is not really for E&I. E&I should be looking at the road network – and that is probably something that should be going on anyway (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) based on the Island Development Plan as it currently stands. It does not mention the Island Development Plan but our President has just confirmed that we do indeed have the money to do that.

So I am not sure this amendment is quite right, to be honest, in terms of what it allocates to E&I. Thank you.

Do you want me –? Yes.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you for giving way.

Just one point to clarify on that: we have resources at the moment for the focused review. If everybody starts putting more things in it, we probably will need more resources.

**Deputy Dyke:** Thank you for pointing that out.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Taylor.

**Deputy Taylor:** Thank you, sir.

A bit of a technical point. Obviously, it has been referenced that this may or may not impact on the DPA's mandate, whether it is in this term or the next. It is not necessarily a problem but I just



wanted to say if this is enough of a hook that the DPA does require resources, they would have access to them and really, just to clarify the final part of the final sentence:

... to direct the Policy & Resources Committee to make available the resources necessary to undertake this work.

The clarity I am seeking is: will this be E&I directing Policy & Resources to allocate resources or would Policy & Resources be directed to make whatever resources are required necessary? Would the DPA be beholden to Environment & Infrastructure to direct us to get resources or would Policy & Resources be able to make it on their own direction?

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gabriel.

**Deputy Gabriel:** Thank you, sir.

I will be supporting the amendment because I sit on E&I, which I am sure my President will be pleased to hear.

But I would like to counter, perhaps, Deputy Mahoney and Deputy Gollop's statements that we should be doing it anyway. I challenge Members to have a look around Guernsey and ask them what Government-funded infrastructure projects have been happening, are happening, have happened in the last term or even the previous Assembly before that? I have racked my brain and I can think of the Airport; of course, we have got the – which was around 2006, I believe – the sewage outfall project. But other than that, there has not been much Government-funded infrastructure development. Of course, we have seen Admiral Park come on line and Elizabeth Avenue and all of the developments around there; but of course, those are not Government-funded.

So if we are doing it anyway and we have got the resources, where are they? Where are these projects? I hope, perhaps in her summing-up, that Deputy de Sausmarez could help me out because I cannot see them and I cannot see that, at the moment, we have got the resources to do it either.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy de Lisle.

**Deputy de Lisle:** This appears to me, sir, to be an open-cheque situation where we have got no idea what this is going to cost (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and we have got no idea as to whether consultants, again, are going to be brought in, because the Department of Environment love to hire consulting teams. To be quite honest, sir, I think we need to have a lot more information before agreeing to something of this nature.

And really, Deputy Prow's Department of Home Affairs have come out with a huge report here, written internally, and I see no reason why, as a result of having this policy approved with regard to the number of 300, they cannot follow up and provide some resource with regard to the infrastructure that may be required. I would see that, perhaps, it is not necessary, at this stage, to have an open cheque or consulting resources to pen this particular report that is required; it can be done within the Home Department.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** This is not an open cheque or anything like it; it is saying that P&R should release the resources necessary. P&R are going to exercise their judgement in any approach to them for those resources. This Assembly, at the first Government Work Plan, decided to trust P&R's judgement with the best part of £1 billion's worth of capital projects to decide whether or not they were getting value-for-money. This is simply saying, 'You cannot spell out every penny now but P&R are requested to release what they can be persuaded is a reasonable amount to do this work.' And, by golly, this work needs to be done! We have failed. Look at the Pointues Rocques: we had

to admit that there was no cohesive infrastructure planning going on to address those sorts of interrelated issues.

It needs to be done, the resources are not there at the moment inside E&I, it needs to be funded, it is not an open cheque, P&R are there to scrutinise how much money will be released. For goodness' sake, this is just straightforward. Let's vote for it.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** I think Deputy Roffey stole my speech in some ways. I think many of the problems with planning and housing are actually the traffic. It comes time and time again down to traffic and the infrastructure in that area – particularly in the north, where we do need better infrastructure. I think then, we will have hopefully a lot fewer complaints about houses going up.

I think the only thing I would caveat it with is that I would prefer it to say, rather than 'to direct the Policy & Resources Committee', to actually let Policy & Resources use their judgement and make sure the money is spent wisely.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** I will be brief, but I do need to make the point, sir, that in my experience, this has been the issue that has perplexed the Douzaines in the north of the Island more than any other: the idea that under our present land usage rules, the majority of the new housing will go into the north of the Island, but in many cases, that housing will be built before the infrastructure is in place to support it.

Of course, infrastructure goes further than simply the measures around water, waste, electricity, and the like; it also encapsulates education. And I notice, sir, that in 2017, in some answers to written questions by the then Deputy Graham, the cost of providing a place in the state system was just over £10,000. *(Laughter)*

**The Bailiff:** And the relevance of that to this debate, Deputy Trott?

**Deputy Trott:** I also notice, sir, that Education's budget has risen substantially, whereas pupil numbers have not, and my rather simple maths draws me to the conclusion that I must have been right and the President of ESC must have been wrong. But back to the –  
I give way.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Point of correction, sir?

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Dudley-Owen.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** The figures as I have stated them are the correct figures as at 2019. Unless something has happened very significantly in the intervening period, then I must contest that Deputy Trott's figures are not correct.

**Deputy Trott:** I do not want to pile on –

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott, just for a moment –

**Deputy Trott:** I beg your pardon, sir.

**The Bailiff:** I did question what the relevance is to this particular amendment of what you are saying.

**Deputy Trott:** I thought you might, *(Laughter)* so I gave it some thought before I stood, sir. Clearly, the provision of schools is a key part of the infrastructure, particularly when we are looking to build hundreds, if not thousands, of additional units in the north of the Island. But I have no intention of testing your patience any further, sir, so I shall sit down. *(Laughter)*

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, it has just gone 5.30. Is it your wish, do you think, that you would like to finish debate on this amendment? (**A Member:** Yes.) (**A Member:** Pour!) I am going to put that motion to you: those in favour of sitting to finish this amendment; those against.

*Members voted Pour.*

**The Bailiff:** I will declare that carried.

Nobody else is rising so I will turn to the President of the Committee, Deputy Prow, to see if he wishes to contribute to this debate.

**Deputy Prow:** Thank you, sir.

Extremely briefly, (**The Bailiff:** Good.) the Committee response is that we do support it and we observe that this work naturally flows on from the work of the policy letter and the strategic population objective.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** And finally, I return to the proposer of the amendment, Deputy de Sausmarez, to reply to the debate.

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Thank you, sir. I too will try to be brief.

There are a few key themes that popped up during debate. Deputy Queripel asked one of the recurring themes, which was around the P&R resources. To be clear, we are not asking for the resources up front to do all of the infrastructure planning that we might possibly need to do in the future; this is basically the scoping report to better understand the requirements that will be needed to meet this policy objective.

And as Deputy Roffey quite rightly said, it is not an open cheque book – and I thank Deputy Ferbrache as well. That is how P&R works, this is how these things work. We would go and have a conversation with P&R and I can assure Members that if P&R did not think that was good value for money or money worth spending, they would not sign that cheque. So I think Members can have the assurance that certainly there are appropriate checks and balances.

But I would also question: if we are not prepared to spend any money to understand the very-much-more-significant expenditure that we are going to need in future, then that is just bizarre. Surely, this is money well spent in order to better understand – if we are scared of this, goodness help us when it comes to the actual expenditure required to implement the infrastructure planning that we will need to meet this objective in the policy letter.

Deputy Mahoney said that this is work that would have to happen anyway, but Deputy Leadbeater answered the point spot-on. This is actually not work that is currently resourced or prioritised; we are working to Government Work Plan prioritisation and resourcing. And if Deputy Mahoney thinks that these kinds of directions are facile, then we have got any number of them in the Propositions, which are arguably less impactful than what is contained in this amendment. So I would argue that it is actually more relevant than many of the Propositions already contained in the policy letter.

The IDP has been mentioned. It is actually mentioned, just in the explanatory note. I am not sure if anyone saw it; it was overleaf. The reason it did not get a mention in the body of the amendment was because the IDP review is the right conduit to look at the land requirements and that is already happening, as Deputy Oliver has confirmed. That is already, also, something that will look at the land requirements of this policy letter, as approved. Also, the States' Strategic – I always struggle

with this – States’ Strategic Housing Indicator will look at the housing-specific implications as well. So essentially, what we have done is carve those aspects out from naming them directly in the body of the amendment, but they are definitely taken into scope when we were formulating the amendment; we did not want to duplicate work or effort because that would not be good value for money.

Deputy Dyke, I think, probably does not understand our mandate: of course we are responsible for electricity infrastructure in the policy. He may have noticed we are in the middle of an energy transition which is going to have quite significant implications for that kind of thing.

I hope that the subsequent debate has clarified for Deputy Taylor his question – he looks satisfied.

Deputy Gabriel makes a good point. I do not know how many times I have been on my feet saying we have got to stop planning on a site-by-site basis; we need that more joined-up, that higher-level, that bigger-picture, that area-wide planning. That is actually something that our Committee has instigated. There is a review that will come out soon which will help us to do that bigger-area network planning. But I would also say that it is very difficult, in the absence of some of the cornerstone decisions like future harbour requirements, to plan infrastructure when we do not know those big policy decisions. So they are interconnected. But if this policy letter and this strategic population objective is approved, we need to get on the front foot, we need to be able to plan effectively for it.

Yes, I think I have answered Deputy Oliver’s points as well.

I am not sure many of Deputy Trott’s were particularly pertinent to this amendment; I am sure he had fun making them.

Actually, Deputy Oliver mentioned transport, and of course, I completely agree. I think we need to recognise that transport currently is probably the single biggest chokehold – I think she would probably agree with me – on development, on housing in particular, coming forward. It is a nettle we need to grasp. And really, I hope that this States can take infrastructure seriously and put its money where its mouth is and start preparing to plan properly, and supporting this amendment would be a really good start.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, we come to the vote on Amendment 1, proposed by Deputy de Sausmarez and seconded by Deputy Haskins.

I invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

*There was a recorded vote.*

#### *Amendment 1*

*Carried – Pour 22, Contre 10, Ne vote pas 1, Absent 4, Did not vote 3*

#### **POUR**

Deputy Blin  
Deputy Brouard  
Deputy Cameron  
Deputy de Sausmarez  
Deputy Dudley-Owen  
Deputy Fairclough  
Deputy Ferbrache  
Deputy Gabriel  
Deputy Gollop  
Deputy Haskins  
Deputy Inder  
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller  
Deputy Leadbeater  
Deputy Matthews  
Deputy Meerveld

#### **CONTRE**

Deputy Aldwell  
Deputy de Lisle  
Deputy Dyke  
Deputy Helyar  
Deputy Le Tissier  
Deputy Mahoney  
Deputy McKenna  
Deputy Murray  
Deputy Queripel  
Deputy Vermeulen

#### **NE VOTE PAS**

Alderney Rep. Roberts

#### **ABSENT**

Deputy Burford  
Deputy Bury  
Deputy Le Tocq  
Deputy St Pier

#### **DID NOT VOTE**

Deputy Falla  
Alderney Rep. Snowdon  
Deputy Soulsby

Deputy Moakes  
Deputy Oliver  
Deputy Parkinson  
Deputy Prow  
Deputy Roffey  
Deputy Taylor  
Deputy Trott

**The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 1, proposed by Deputy de Sausmarez and seconded by Deputy Haskins, there voted in favour, 22 Members; against 10 Members; there was 1 abstention; 3 of those who are recorded as present did not vote; and the 4 Members are still away. Therefore, I will declare Amendment 1 duly carried. That means that we have inserted Proposition 4(a).

We will now adjourn, Members, until 9.30 tomorrow morning, when we will resume with the next amendment.

**The Assembly adjourned at 5.40 p.m.**