

Council of Ministers

(30th Meeting)

(Business conducted via electronic mail)

14th April 2023**Part A (Non-Exempt)**

All members were present, with the exception of Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville and St. Martin, Minister for International Development, Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf of St. Saviour, Minister for External Relations and Financial Services, Deputy K.F. Morel of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity, Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture, Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North, Minister for Children and Education and Deputy I.J. Gorst of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter, Minister for Treasury and Resources, from whom apologies had been received.

Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter, Chief Minister
Deputy D.J. Warr of St. Helier South, Minister for Housing and Communities

Deputy H.M. Miles of St. Brelade, Minister for Home Affairs (for item A2 only)

Deputy J. Renouf of St. Brelade, Minister for the Environment (for item A2 only)

Deputy M.E. Millar of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity, Minister for Social Security

Deputy T.J.A. Binet of St. Saviour, Minister for Infrastructure (for item A1 only)

Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement, Minister for Health and Social Services

Deputy S.M. Ahier of St. Helier North, Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources (for item A1 only and in lieu of the Minister)

In attendance -

P. Bradbury, Head of Ministerial Office

S. Idiong, Private Secretary to the Minister for Social Security

K.L. Slack, Clerk to the Council of Ministers

Note: The Minutes of this meeting comprise Part A only

Land
Transaction
Under
Standing Order
168(3) -
Andium
Homes Ltd
Site,
Kensington
Place – Sale to
the Public:
deferral of
approval

A1. The Council of Ministers, with reference to Minute No. B6 of its meeting of 28th March 2023, considered draft Comments in relation to the Proposition of Deputy L.J. Farnham of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter, entitled Land Transaction Under Standing Order 168(3) - Andium Homes Ltd Site, Kensington Place – Sale to the Public: deferral of approval (P.11/2023 referred).

The Council noted draft Comments, which reminded Members of the Assembly that, in December 2022, they had debated and rejected a Proposition to defer decisions on the hospital and had subsequently approved funding in an Amendment to the 2023-26 Government Plan, including the acquisition costs for Kensington Place, to enable the project to proceed. The draft Comments also set out the financial implications of deferring the approval of the sale of Kensington Place and the likely impact on the programme timeline. As a consequence, they asked the Assembly to

(P.11/2023):
Comments.

reject P.11/2023.

The Council approved the Comments and instructed the Head of Ministerial Office to arrange for them to be presented to the States.

Jersey Homes
Trust Rent
Increase –
Assistance
Scheme
(P.15/2023):
Comments.

A2. The Council of Ministers considered the Proposition of Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier Central, entitled ‘Jersey Homes Trust Rent Increase – Assistance Scheme’ (P.15/2023 referred), which requested the Minister for Social Security, in consultation with the Minister for Housing and Communities, to establish a scheme which would subsidise the rent increases wholly or partly, for a period of 3 months, of those tenants in relatively low income households, who had been affected by the Jersey Homes Trust rent increase of up to 9 per cent.

The Council was cognisant that, since the Proposition had been lodged, Jersey Homes Trust had indicated that it would delay the implementation of the rent increase by 3 months to 1st July 2023 and that the next increase would not be until 1st July 2024. As a consequence of this announcement, the need to provide an element of subsidy for a 3-month period would not be necessary. Moreover, any tenant in receipt of Income Support would receive an uplift to cover the rent increase, subject to them being housed appropriately and officers within the Customer and Local Services Department had been liaising with tenants of Jersey Homes Trust to ensure they were aware of any benefits to which they were entitled and to address any individual queries.

The Council understood tenants’ concerns around the proposed rent increases but was of the view that requests to provide subsidies from public money following rent increases by private landlords could exacerbate the rental situation. It recalled that the Minister for Housing and Communities was working on proposals to reform the legislation relating to residential tenancies, including minimum standards and notice periods for rental increases.

The Council accordingly decided that it wished to present Comments to this effect, encouraging Members not to support P.15/2023 and instructed officers to take the necessary action.