

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF TYNWALD COURT (QUESTIONS)

Douglas, Tuesday, 18th June 2002
at 10.37 a.m.

Present:

The President of Tynwald (the Hon. N Q Cringle).

In the Council: The Lord Bishop (the Rt Rev Noël Debroy Jones), the Attorney-General (Mr W J H Corlett QC), Hon Mrs C M Christian, Messrs E A Crowe, D F K Delaney, J R Kniveton, E G Lowey, Dr E J Mann, Messrs J N Radcliffe and G H Waft, with Mrs M Cullen, Clerk of the Council.

In the Keys: The Speaker (the Hon J A Brown) (Castletown); Mr D M Anderson (Glenfaba); Hon A R Bell (Ramsey); Mr R E Quine OBE (Ayre); Mr J D Q Cannan (Michael); Mrs H Hannan (Peel); Hon S C Rodan (Garff); Hon R K Corkill and Mr A J Earnshaw (Onchan); Mr G M Quayle (Middle); Messrs J R Houghton and R W Henderson (Douglas North); Hon D C Cretney and Mr A C Duggan (Douglas South); Hon R P Braidwood and Mrs B J Cannell (Douglas East); Hon A F Downie and Hon J P Shimmin (Douglas West); Hon J Rimington, Mr Q B Gill and Hon Mrs P M Crowe (Rushen); with Mr M Cornwell-Kelly, Clerk of Tynwald.

Questions for Oral Answer

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Sustainable Development - Johannesburg World Summit – Isle of Man Presentation (Mrs Hannan) | TQ 126 |
| 2. Legislative Council – Respect for Will of the Keys (Mr Singer -withdrawn) | |
| 3. Government – Abidance by Will of the Keys (Mr Singer - withdrawn) | |
| 4. Litter – Control in Streets – Notices (Mr Singer) | TQ 128 |
| 5. Archallagan – Ash Disposal – Public Meeting (Mr Anderson) | TQ 130 |
| 6. Local Authority Housing – Refurbishment – Value for Money (Mrs Hannan) | TQ 132 |
| 7. Public Sector Housing – New Planning Applications (Mr Lowey) | TQ 133 |
| 8. Dental Service – Negotiation of Remuneration Settlement (Mr Singer) | TQ 134 |
| 9. Social Security – Initial Support for the Sick (Mr Henderson) | TQ 136 |
| 10. Invalid Care Allowance – Tax Liability (Mr Henderson) | TQ 137 |
| 11. Douglas Harbour – Refuelling Arrangements for Yachts (Mr Houghton) | TQ 138 |
| 12. Air Transport – Increase in Flight Cancellations (Mr Singer) | TQ 138 |
| 13. Sub-Post Offices – Future Policy for (Mrs Hannan) | TQ 141 |
| 14. House of Manannan – Neglected State of Overflow Car Park (Mrs Hannan) | TQ 144 |

Questions for Written Answer

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 15. Jovelli Limited – Beneficial Owners (Mr Karran) | TQ 146 |
| 16. Government Office Accommodation – Expenditure on Rents (Mr Karran) | TQ 146 |
| 17. Goldie House – Rental Payments (Mr Karran) | TQ 146 |
| 18. Mount Murray Development – Company Shareholders and Beneficial Owners (Mr Karran) | TQ 146 |
| 19. Douglas – Government Rented Properties at 27 and 29 Prospect Hill (Mr Karran) | TQ 147 |
-

| | |
|--|--------|
| 20. Rose Estates Limited – Shareholders and Beneficial Owners (Mr Karran) | TQ 147 |
| 21. Invalid Care Allowance – Estimate of Tax Levied (Mr Henderson) | TQ 147 |
| 22. Invalid Care Allowance – Classification (Mr Henderson) | TQ 148 |
| 23. Financial Supervision Commission – Post-Holders’ Salaries (Mr Karran) | TQ 148 |
| 24. Attendance Allowance – Payment of (Mr Henderson) | TQ 148 |
| 25. Invalid Care Allowance – Number of Recipients (Mr Henderson) | TQ 149 |
| 26. Long-Term Incapacity Benefit (Mr Henderson) | TQ 149 |
| 27. Manx Pension Supplement – Percentage Rate etc. (Mr Houghton) | TQ 149 |
| 28. Long-Term Incapacity Benefit – Case Load (Mr Henderson) | TQ 150 |
| 29. Gross Domestic Product – Percentage Spent on Health – Comparisons (Mr Quayle) | TQ 150 |
| 30. Gross Domestic Product – Percentage Spent on Education – Comparisons (Mr Quayle) | TQ 150 |

**Sustainable Development –
Johannesburg World Summit –
Isle of Man Representation –
Question by Mrs Hannan**

Question 1. The hon. member for Peel (Mrs Hannan) to ask the Chief Minister:

Will the Isle of Man be represented at the World Summit on sustainable development in Johannesburg?

The President: I call upon the hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

Mrs Hannan: Eaghtyrane, I beg leave to ask the question standing in my name.

The President: I call on the Chief Minister to reply.

Mr Corkill: Thank you, Mr President. As we understand the situation at present, the Crown dependencies are unlikely to receive an invitation to be included in the United Kingdom delegation to attend the conference, but we will be represented by the United Kingdom Government delegation, as we are at most international conferences.

The President: Mrs Hannan.

Mrs Hannan: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. Could I ask the Chief Minister if he does not think that the World Summit on Sustainable Development is important enough to have a member, even an officer in place as an observer? Would the Chief Minister also not agree with me that we have had representatives in conferences in various places, and each time we have said on those occasions, ‘This is wonderful,’ because we have been included in taxation discussions, on conventions at the European Union, at OECD and other taxation concerns and discussions where the Chief Minister and the Chief Financial Controller have attended? And why is the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg not seen as important or even more important than that?

The President: Chief Minister.

Mr Corkill: I fully understand the hon. member’s comments in relation to the fact that at certain moments in the past we have achieved the ability at least to get observer status in a number of international forums, but generally speaking we do not. The Johannesburg Summit 2002 is actually going to bring together tens of thousands of participants, and that will include heads of state and governments. There will also be national delegates and leaders from non-governmental organisations and so it is a judgement really as to whether we think it is best use of our resources to send an officer or an observer for a two-week period when, in fact, the information will be available to us through the United Kingdom representation, which is looking after our interests in this particular area at this time, sir.

The President: Hon. member for Peel.

Mrs Hannan: Is it not a case, Eaghtyrane, that if every country took that particular stance there would be nobody at this convention? They would all just get on and do what they want to do themselves. Is it not a case that this sustainable development convention will affect the Isle of Man and that we should be taking it seriously and we should have someone there?

The President: Chief Minister.

Mr Corkill: Certainly I am willing to take on board the hon. member’s comments and to reconsider as to whether someone should go. I reiterate that we will, at the moment, not receive an invitation but certainly I am quite happy to discuss the issue with the Lord Chancellor’s department, but I do reiterate whether we will, in fact, as an Island get the value from sending someone in this particular forum. I would suggest that there are certain forums where there is a more direct return for the Island, whereas this one is a bit more oblique. I would reiterate that this is a very broad conference, not on specific issues, and we as a government have not at this stage ascertained what the benefit would be of sending an observer. We would have no input into the process, no voting rights – we do not have that status – but we are, through our United Kingdom connections, able to get all the information that is discussed at that forum.

The President: Hon. member for Douglas East, Mrs Cannell.

Mrs Cannell: Thank you, Mr President. Bearing in mind that the Isle of Man does have party status at Commonwealth conferences when discussing things such as sustainable development, does the Chief Minister not agree with me that we, at the very least, should be lobbying the Lord Chancellor's department to express our view and opinion, to be carried on board and taken to this particular conference and hopefully minuted? And further, how can the Chief Minister be absolutely sure that the United Kingdom is going to represent the Island's best interests if the Island does not have input, at least, to the Lord Chancellor's department or the UK representatives who will be attending this very important meeting?

The President: Chief Minister.

Mr Corkill: Mr President, I would reverse the question, if I may, in as much as I would ask the hon. questioner where the Isle of Man's interests and the United Kingdom's interests differ in relation to the issues that will be discussed at this summit? This is a United Nations-driven initiative - it is 10 years on since the Rio convention - and unless the large countries of the world, particularly the G7 countries, sign-up to these issues, then no changes actually occur and, of course, the United States' stance in relation to the Rio convention has received a lot of publicity in recent times. If we were able to go to this forum and vote and promote our own policy into this global forum then that would be a good thing, but we are not in that position; therefore I think it may well be a waste of resources to have someone there because, as I have said, the information that comes out of the forum - and it will be immense bearing in mind the tens of thousands of participants - will be available to us in the future.

The President: Hon. member of Council, Mr Lowey.

Mr Lowey: The very point the Chief Minister made in his final remarks there - perhaps he could explain why it is not important for us to be there and yet it is important for thousands of non-governmental agencies and representatives of those agencies to be there? What is their input if they did not think they were getting something out of it? I believe that the Isle of Man should be there. As for voting, the Isle of Man belongs to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which is a non-voting organisation. So it is not so much votes that count; it is influence and being there when decisions are being arrived at before, and I do believe that all small voices should swell the chorus of environmental concerns, which this conference is all about. Would the Chief Minister not agree that it is important that small places such as the Isle of Man and the Falkland Islands, which is even smaller in numbers, should be represented at these international conferences, because it was in the Falkland Islands, I would remind the Chief Minister, that global warming first came to prominence?

The President: I could remind the hon. member of Council that is a matter of opinion rather than a supplementary question. Chief Minister.

Mr Lowey: Does the minister not agree?

Mr Corkill: Yes, Mr President. The Government of the Isle of Man is not wishing to be obstructive in the comments that are being made by hon. members, but there are certain options that we could go forward with if we wish. We could establish whether we can attend in our own right but then we would not expect to be able to contribute to the debates, and that option seems worthless to me. We could also make representations to be given a place on the UK delegation if we felt that we needed to have a symbolic presence there, and that is all that would be - symbolism. The third option we have is that if we have got any specific points that we want to promote at the conference, we could ask the United Kingdom to promote those on our behalf where they do, in fact, have the voting rights.

Those seem to me the options that are available. I am not saying no, we are not going to have a presence there at Question Time this morning. I am quite happy to look at the options again, bearing in mind hon. members' comments, but I have to say that at this point I do not see the value, from the Isle of Man perspective, in the cost of a two-week conference for an observer who would be lost amongst the tens of thousands of people.

The President: I return for a final supplementary. Hon. member for Peel.

Mrs Hannan: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. Would the Chief Minister make representations to the Lord Chancellor's office that we are involved because this affects the biodiversity convention, the climate change convention and also Agenda 21, which looks at sustainable development? And will he also, following on representations, report on the outcome of that to this hon. Court?

The President: Chief Minister.

Mr Corkill: Mr President, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, as I have said, is 10 years after the Rio convention and the UN General Assembly has called for this summit to reinvigorate, at the highest political level, the global commitment towards the achievement of sustainable development. So certainly the pressure and the emphasis is being put on large nations to respond 10 years on from the Rio situation.

I have my doubts as to whether they are actually going to do that. Certainly the recent signs, particularly from the United States, would, in fact, suggest that there has been a dilution in that commitment and hence the need for this Rio summit. I think, based on that particular situation, we would be best to observe how this summit progresses. The hon. questioner talks about contact with the Lord

Chancellor's department; I am more than happy to be in contact again with them. We already have, in response to this question, to find out what our options are and I am quite happy to have some dialogue again to see what our options are and reassess the situation as to whether it would be worthwhile sending an observer to this summit, because I do believe that would be the only option we have. I am quite happy to reassess that situation, sir.

The President: Now, hon. members, in the absence of Mr Singer, questions 2 and 3 will not be put this morning.

**Litter – Control in Streets
– Notices –
Question by Mr Singer**

Question 4. The hon. member for Ramsey (Mr Singer) to ask the Minister for Local Government and the Environment:

Does your department or local authorities have the power to issue 'street litter control notices'?

The President: We turn then on the question paper to number 4 and I call on the hon. member for Douglas East, who will ask the question in the place of Mr Singer.

Mrs Cannell: Thank you, Mr President. I beg leave to ask the question.

The President: I call upon the Minister for Local Government and the Environment, hon. member for Rushen.

Mrs Crowe: Thank you, Mr President. The main provisions regarding the control of litter are contained within the Litter Act of 1972, and there are no powers relating to the issue of street litter control notices by either the department or local authorities within the Act. However, section 4A of the Act, litter in designated places, provides that local authorities, by order, approved by the department, may extend to owners of certain designated areas of land, car parks, shopping precincts, the forecourts of certain commercial premises et cetera, and things such as fast food shops, but not highways, a duty to ensure that their premises are kept clear of litter.

If it appears to the local authority that an occupier of premises has failed to comply with that duty, the authority may serve a notice requiring the owner to take such steps as may be specified in the notice to clear the place of litter. In addition, the department may also issue a code of practice in regard to such duties. The responsibility for street sweeping throughout the Island is shared between the Department of Transport and local authorities. In certain areas local authorities have an agency agreement whereby they carry out road-sweeping on behalf of the Department of Transport, and in other towns of the Island the sweeping of streets

and the collection of litter rests with the Department of Transport.

The President: Hon. member for Douglas East.

Mrs Cannell: Thank you, Mr President, and I thank the hon. minister for her response, but does she agree with me that there is a problem with the 1972 Act 4A in that the provision there only covers designated areas? And can she explain, if it only covers designated areas, what happens when litter which emanates from a fast food premises, perhaps open to early hours in the morning, and blows about outside of the area that is covered by the designation? Are there powers, therefore, under that particular Act under 4A? In other words, if someone drops litter that emanates from a particular fast food premises where the name of the fast food premises is on the litter and that blows a quarter of a mile up the road, can the local authority or the government department still take action under the 1972 Act?

The President: Minister for Local Government and the Environment.

Mrs Crowe: Mr President, I do believe that would be difficult and it was drawn to my attention, in fact, last night when I drove into Douglas and noticed on the site that had been occupied by the fun fair the huge amount of litter that had been left in that area that was blowing all over Douglas. It was a disgrace. Litter is a problem that I have highlighted. I am committed to do whatever I can to clear up the problem of litter on the Island, but it is something that involves other departments alongside my own, which is involved in the environmental aspects of this litter around the Island. But I do believe we will be looking . . . It is very difficult. A local authority can designate the area outside a commercial premises to be kept clear of litter, but the problem happens when that litter is blown away, but there is an onus on the owners of takeaway food stores, of all commercial premises, to keep their areas litter-free.

The President: Hon. member for Council, Mr Delaney.

Mr Delaney: Thank you, Mr President. In the information also supplied to the minister for the replies to the question, has the minister got any information on when the last person, if ever, was prosecuted for non-compliance with the 1972 Act with an order? Could the minister indicate if you have that information and, if you have, would you tell us?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: Unfortunately I do not have that information with me today and I –

Mr Delaney: Is it likely it was never?

Mrs Crowe: Yes, I presume that the hon. member of Council might be correct in that assumption.

The President: Hon. member of Council, Mrs Christian.

Mrs Christian: Would the hon. member agree that the emphasis should be on individual responsibility, notwithstanding these other powers of local authorities and responsibilities of designated properties, but it should be on the individuals concerned to dispose of their litter in a responsible manner?

The President: Minister for Local Government.

Mrs Crowe: Absolutely, and it is quite true that we must all take ownership of this problem on the Isle of Man, not drive past, not walk past but do something about it, and if everyone did that, we would have a litter-free Island. We must not rely on others to take ownership of what is our problem. Everyone has a responsibility to dispose of litter safely, and that includes builders and their building construction rubbish, private individuals, fast food stores, all commercial premises and government buildings.

The President: Hon. member for Douglas East, Mrs Cannell.

Mrs Cannell: Thank you, Mr President. Bearing in mind the apparent shortcomings in the 1972 Act, in particular with respect to 4A, and bearing in mind that the minister, in the light of her comments today, previously expressed the need to reduce the litter problem in the Island overall, will she consider promoting legislation to strengthen the hand of the local authority under the 1972 Act to be able to seek a prosecution for dropping litter on the highway rather than just depend upon the individual? And would she also further agree with me that the carrot-and-stick approach is the best approach in respect of this, and it is no good just complaining about those who drop litter and that we are all responsible for it, but there has to be not only the approach at the front end, but there has to be a penalty at the back end also?

A Member: Hear, hear.

The President: Minister for Local Government and the Environment.

Mrs Crowe: Well, as I say, commenting on the last comment, I would suggest if we all took ownership for the litter problem on the Isle of Man, there would be no need to have a penalty as a last resort. I will most certainly look at the provisions contained within the Litter Act as I have a policy of regularly reviewing all legislation, this is a 1972 Act and, I daresay, needs updating.

The President: Hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

Mrs Hannan: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. Could I ask the minister, while taking into account that we should be concerned about litter, where there is a lot of litter left, should we not also accept that that is a public involvement in something and that to bring people together to enjoy a street party or a fair, we should accept that there will be rubbish left and that maybe we should set in motion to actually tidy-up as soon as these places are vacated and not leave it until the next morning or later on in the week before we tidy-up and therefore create photo opportunities for the press which make a big deal out of it? And should we not welcome the public activity in these areas and that we are able to put on entertainments in this way but support them?

The President: Minister for the Local Government and the Environment.

Mrs Crowe: Yes indeed, I would quite agree with that and that was the point I made about the funfair site in Douglas. There should have been provision made as that activity was leaving the site for the litter-sweepers, whatever, to be in there to clean the site or a provision, as part of their licence, to make sure that they left the site clean and tidy and, if not so, they should have been prosecuted. The area was a disgrace; I do not know if it still is, but half of the litter on the site is now up Douglas promenade.

The President: A final supplementary, the hon. member, Mr Braidwood.

Mr Braidwood: Thank you, Mr President. Would the minister agree that under the 1972 Litter Act, amended by the Public Health Act of 1990, local authorities have the power to appoint litter wardens who can issue fixed penalty notices? The fine at the moment is £10. The minister's department can increase that amount, and would it be worthwhile to increase that amount to a worthwhile sum of, say, £50 to £75, which then goes to the local authority and therefore the wardens would then be self-financing?

The President: Minister for Local Government and the Environment.

Mrs Crowe: Yes indeed, I dare say it might, but the point that has been made by the hon. member of Council, Mr Delaney, is that there is really no point in having these measures in place if they are not enforced, and what we must do is make sure that the litter is not about. People are conscious and would do what they can. We have an active group who are cleaning up beaches in their own time, we have many campaigns that we are hoping to run for next year's litter campaign, but we must all take ownership of this problem. Prosecution, in my view, is not the answer. Even if I felt that this would be possible, looking at

this Act which has been in place since 1972 I feel certain that prosecutions have not helped one little bit.

**Archallagan – Ash Disposal –
Public Meeting –
Question by Mr Anderson**

Question 5. The hon. member for Glenfaba (Mr Anderson) to ask the Minister for Local Government and the Environment:

In view of the fact that you have promised full public consultation on the proposed use of Archallagan Plantation for the disposal of bottom ash from the incinerator and other waste not suitable for incineration, will you and your departmental officers attend a public meeting with concerned residents of the parishes this will impact upon?

The President: I call on the hon. member for Glenfaba.

Mr Anderson: Thank you, Mr President. I beg leave to ask the question standing in my name.

The President: Again, the answer is in the hands of the Minister for Local Government and the Environment, Mrs Crowe.

Mrs Crowe: Thank you, Mr President. On 21st May this year I arranged a series of presentations to explain the department's reason for choosing Archallagan as its preferred site for a future land filling of construction and similar waste. These presentations were attended by the hon. members of this Court, representatives of local authorities for the area and residents in the area of Archallagan, as well as the media. Indeed, they were very well attended.

At these presentations I indicated to all present that the department proposed to hold a public exhibition in the area as soon as the remaining assessments have been completed by the department's consultants and before the planning application is submitted for consideration by Governor in Council. I can confirm that there will also be full public consultation on the proposed planned use of the site when the planning application is lodged, and anyone who wishes to submit views will be able to do so in writing and request to be allowed to appear before an independent planning inspector to give oral evidence.

I will ensure that the fullest information possible is made available to all those interested in the department's proposal to use a small corner of the plantation. In order to do this, we intend to arrange a public exhibition with all the experts available to speak face to face with those who have concerns or queries regarding the site. It is important that everyone who wishes to have further and better particulars, or clarification, or explanation, has an opportunity of discussing these matters with those persons who are best able to provide the information required. At the exhibition the department expects to hold – and this

will be within the next month – the most up-to-date documentation will be available relating to the proposed development, and I have given a commitment there will be a full and relevant exchange of information at that time. The department has nothing to hide and wishes to be open and transparent in progressing this planning proposal, and I am delighted to say that this morning I was able to confirm that we will be holding the exhibition in Foxdale School on Friday, 12th July from 3.00 p.m. until 8.00 p.m. and all day on Saturday, 13th July, and I hope everyone that has an interest will attend at that time, when the experts will all be available.

The President: Hon. member for Glenfaba.

Mr Anderson: Thank you, minister, for your reply. Would she not agree that, following that exhibition that is now planned to take place in Foxdale School in July, that would be the opportunity? Having had people's concerns highlighted following that presentation, then your questions emanating from that presentation would be far better informed, and that would then be the time to have the public meeting following the exhibition that the minister is going to put on, because all the relevant experts will be on hand. Are you telling me, then, that the SLR experts are not going to be on hand at that exhibition?

Mrs Crowe: They are.

The President: Minister.

Mrs Crowe: All the experts involved with all aspects of the site will be available at the exhibition, and I am hopeful at that time to be able to answer all the queries, or any concerns that arise, on a face-to-face basis. If, indeed, anyone cannot make those dates, for a short time all the information will be in my office and I will be only too pleased for anyone to make an appointment to view them there.

The President: Hon. member for Glenfaba.

Mr Anderson: Can the minister then confirm that she is not willing to have a public meeting following this exhibition?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: I am not sure of the worth of a public meeting if all concerns and queries have been answered. I feel certain that the public that are interested will attend the exhibition where all the available new assessments and all the experts will be available to answer questions. If at that time further requests are made to me, I will do my best to accommodate them, but I did have a request to attend a meeting and on the four dates given, unfortunately, I had previous engagements to speak in the evening.

The President: Hon. member for Middle, Mr Quayle.

Mr Quayle: Mr President, I thank the hon. minister for that reply but, with regard to the fact that the hon. Minister for Local Government and the Environment had previously indicated in an earlier conversation with me the willingness of herself and her officers to attend a public meeting held on 22nd May at Foxdale to address concerns from the people of Middle and Glenfaba had she been available, will she reconsider her earlier answer and would she not agree with me that a public meeting is the best forum possible to give as many people (**Two Members:** Hear, hear.) an opportunity to hear relevant answers to questions put in public rather than requiring people to individually ask numerous questions at an exhibition?

The President: Let us not go over the same supplementary on a number of occasions, hon. members. Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: Well actually, I do think a public exhibition where all the experts are available on the numerous topics - hydrologically, environmentally, all the topics that need to be addressed - is far better on a face-to-face basis in a public exhibition where all the information is available.

The President: Hon. member for Rushen, Mr Gill.

Mr Gill: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. Is the general principle of engaging in meaningful public consultation one which the Department of Local Government and the Environment support and engage in?

The President: Minister.

Mrs Crowe: Yes, indeed, it is. I think it is most important, and I think the relevant word there is 'meaningful.' I do think it is most important and I think that an exhibition, with all the evidence available, all the experts available to answer questions, will be a full, meaningful consultation.

The President: Member for Douglas East, Mrs Cannell.

Mrs Cannell: Thank you, Mr President. Would the hon. minister agree with me that by holding a public exhibition it denies the rights of the public at large to express a view, and further, that this is propounded by the face-to-face, one-to-one? Would she not agree with me that that is the department attempting to divide and conquer public opinion, and if she is going to dismiss the very question that was put to her which was: 'Will you and your department officers attend a public meeting?' which she has failed to answer this morning, will she consider, at the very least, that a questionnaire is circulated at such an exhibition outlining all the potential questions which may arise so at least the public out there can indicate what their concern is? And further, she has failed this morning to address the concerns of the public so I will

put it to her: will she consider the public's view? Will she, and her department, listen to what the people say?

Mr Quayle: Hear, hear.

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: I think the whole point of holding a public exhibition was clearly demonstrated in the urban regeneration exhibition we held some time ago that some members of that constituency attended. I would like to point out that we published a questionnaire at that public exhibition with all the kinds of concerns, and space for extra concerns, to be viewed. People were able to allay their fears by speaking with the experts on what was going to happen at that time. This is the whole point of having the public exhibition in Foxdale School: the public will be able to get the correct information from the experts at that time. Any public concern, I feel certain, for Archallagan will be expressed to me and will be taken on board. All the opportunities will be available through the planning process, which is a process of consultation.

The Speaker: Hon. member of Council, Mr Delaney.

Mr Delaney: Thank you, Mr President. Are the minister and her advisers aware that this will be the first time, certainly in my 25 years in this building, in this Court - that a direct request from a member, Mr Anderson in this case, has been refused for a minister or leader or head of a department to attend such a public meeting? It is common courtesy to attend a meeting at the request of the member. Will the minister reconsider, please, rather than a resolution in this Tynwald for him to attend?

The President: Minister.

Mrs Crowe: Yes, indeed. I take on board the comments the hon. member of Council has made. What I am saying is, let us wait until the public exhibition, which is only a matter of weeks away, to see if there are still concerns then and if a public meeting is requested. I was requested to attend a public meeting but I had long-standing engagements with the likes of the WI and the Mothers Union who I had committed myself to attend and could not alter those dates to be present at the public meeting I was requested to go to.

The President: Hon. member for Douglas East, Mrs Cannell.

Mrs Cannell: Thank you, Mr President. Is the hon. minister aware that the questionnaire which was circulated during one of the department's exhibitions on a proposal was at the instigation of not only myself but my colleague, Mr Braidwood for Douglas East, and in fact the department had no intention during meetings with the department and myself and my colleague of

circulating such, but it was at the intervention of the members for the area? Will she circulate a questionnaire at the exhibition to be held later on?

The President: Hon. member, I think the question has been answered previously. Hon. member for Middle, Mr Quayle.

Mr Quayle: Thank you, Mr President. Can the hon. minister confirm that, as part of the site selection assessment, an environmental assessment of the site has been carried out? And would she further agree that an environmental assessment will have identified the detrimental impacts any proposed development will have on the flora, fauna, water courses, visual impact, highways and most importantly, the residents of both sheadings of Middle and Glenfaba?

The President: Now, we are not getting into a debate on the whole of the principle, hon. members, but the minister can reply.

Mrs Crowe: Yes, indeed. A complete environmental assessment has been carried out on all the aspects that the questioner has just mentioned, and this is the whole reason that it is far preferable for each of those experts to answer the questions rather than it being left to a public meeting where perhaps I myself would not have the full knowledge that each of those individual experts has and they will be available to answer questions in detail (*Interjections*) at that time.

The President: I return to the original question for a final supplementary. Mr Anderson.

Mr Anderson: Thank you, Mr President. My final supplementary is just to ask for a definitive answer to my original question: will you attend a public meeting with your officers - yes or no?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: I have not been invited, Mr President, at this date. (*Laughter*)

Welcome to Visitors

The President: Hon. members, before we turn to number 6, I would like, on your behalf this morning, to welcome into our public gallery the senior pupils of the Ballaugh Primary School (**Members:** Hear, hear.) It is good to see, in fact, that we have still that annual visit from Ballaugh School, well turned out as is usual, and it is nice to see them attending this morning. Equally, hon. members, we have the senior pupils from King William's College in attendance this morning. It is equally good to see them joining us to learn about our parliamentary procedure here on the Island.

Members: Hear, hear.

Local Authority Housing – Refurbishment – Value for Money – Question by Mrs Hannan

Question 6. The hon. member for Peel (Mrs Hannan) to ask the Minister for Local Government and the Environment:

- (1) *Are you satisfied that refurbishment of local authority properties provides good value for money; and*
- (2) *As part of that refurbishment, does putting double-glazed units into already faulty windows constitute good value for money?*

The President: I call on the hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

Mrs Hannan: I beg leave, Eaghtyrane, to ask the question standing in my name.

The President: Again, the answer is in the hands of the hon. member, Mrs Crowe.

Mrs Crowe: Thank you, Mr President. Hon. members will be aware that much of the Island's public sector housing is relatively old and in need of major reinvestment. The department secures funding for itself and local authorities through the government's capital programme. For this reinvestment in planned maintenance works, which range from relatively simple elemental replacement to complete refurbishment, each project is subject to a full appraisal which not only takes into account value for money but also the total funding available in the capital programme and planned maintenance commitments elsewhere on the Island. The department, in consultation with local authorities, has to strike a balance between what ideally could be done and what can be afforded, and this exercise requires judgements to be made and inevitably a degree of compromise.

I believe the hon. member for Peel is referring in her question to the external insulation and render contract at Boilley Spittal in Peel. As part of this project, the single glazing is being replaced with double glazing but - and this is unusual - the existing uPVC window frames are being retained because they are actually less than 15 years old and are in a reasonable condition. The commissioners' technical officer has informed my staff that the window ironmongery will also be overhauled and replaced where necessary. The scope of work for this project was agreed with the department and considered to be the most cost-effective approach in view of the available funding at that time.

As part of this year's budget, the Treasury minister was able to announce a major increase in capital funding for new local authority housing refurbishment and planned maintenance. The increase is from £48 million to £88 million over the next five years and will enable existing homes to be improved at an accelerated rate and in some cases as part of a more

effective package. For instance, in Peel, it has been agreed that similar properties on the other side of the estate which have severe foundation and structural problems will be demolished and new build will be the best option for that area on the Boilley Spittal. Even with additional funding, local authorities and the department will be expected to seek value for money and obtain optimum life from their existing building components.

The President: Hon. member for Peel.

Mrs Hannan: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. The minister has accepted that this is value for money and it is planned maintenance; why, then, were the roofs of these properties not renewed?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: They are being considered for a further scheme. At that time the roofs were not identified as part of the maintenance scheme that is in place for the particular houses that we are talking about.

The President: Member for Peel.

Mrs Hannan: Thank you. Would the minister clarify the last response? Is she saying that these roofs which are faulty will be replaced in another scheme? And also, could she also comment on the maintenance or the refurbishment? Would it be usual to report to the local authority on a monthly or bi-monthly basis on the progress that this refurbishment is making, or would the reports be made by the officers to the Department of Local Government as this is a government-funded scheme?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: Well, in the first part of the question I would hope that all faulty roofs, an essential part of keeping a building's fabric intact, will be replaced as part of the accelerated housing maintenance schemes with the extra funding we have now received. As for the reporting system, all these projects have a standard reporting system. I feel certain that if the commissioners had wanted to have any information whatsoever, they only needed to ask the architects or the QS on site to in fact furnish them with that information. We do, of course, receive a report on the works as they are progressed in the normal way that capital projects and refurbishments and all building work are carried out.

The President: Hon. member of Council, Mr Delaney.

Mr Delaney: Thank you, Mr President. Whereas the minister's department is to be congratulated, certainly the staff, in relation to the replacement of windows they have carried out, could I ask the minister if she will give an undertaking to look at the situation

where local authorities under you carry out this work and replace windows particularly where, after replacing the windows, internal work where the fittings do not fit, the local tenants are requested to either replaster the internal part and redecorate as has occurred, for example, in lower Lord Street, Douglas, where the people in a place called Coronation Terrace, as we know it, were left with gaps on the inside of the houses where the windows were put in and were expected to put them back together? I know this has also occurred in other parts of Douglas represented by South Douglas and North Douglas. Could the minister make sure that local authorities, when asking for tenders, include that work – recovery of the condition of the inside of the building?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: Yes, indeed, and I would tell the hon. member of Council that we, in fact, are working far more closely now with all local authorities. We have an overview on all of these schemes. We are seeking that local authorities put in place a planned maintenance scheme for their housing stock so it does not get in the condition that some of the houses are in on our Island at the present time.

Mr Delaney: Thank you.

The President: Hon. member Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: Eaghtyrane, would the minister inform this hon. House: is she satisfied that, with the refurbishment of local authority properties, the energy efficiency standards are at a sufficient level as far as local authority housing is concerned as this is a section of the community that can least afford to pay high energy costs? Could she inform this hon. House: what are the energy-saving standards as far as local authority houses are concerned? Are they higher than what would be for the private sector and if not, why not?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: Yes, it is well-known that I am very keen to increase the energy-efficient values and view values for all housing on the Isle of Man. At present building regulations do not stipulate between private sector and public sector housing but, indeed, there will be new regulations. I believe they are with our legislative draftsmen at the present time and I will be delighted to see them introduced to a higher standard throughout the Island.

Public Sector Housing – New Planning Applications – Question by Mr Lowey

Question 7. The hon. member of the Council (Mr Lowey) to ask the Minister for Local Government and the Environment:

How many new planning applications for homes in the public sector have been submitted since November 2001 –

(a) *by your department; and*

(b) *by local authorities?*

The President: I call on the hon. member of Council, Mr Lowey.

Mr Lowey: Thank you, Mr President. I beg leave to ask the question standing in my name.

The President: Again, I ask the Minister for Local Government and the Environment to reply.

Mrs Crowe: Mr President, the number of planning applications made for public sector housing since 1st November 2001 by the department is seven and by local authorities is five and I am sure hon. members will be delighted to know that this will result in close to 160 new public sector dwellings.

The President: Hon. member of Council, Mr Lowey.

Mr Lowey: Would the minister like to break that down into regions? I am led to believe that most of those houses are in the Douglas area. And would she not agree that housing need is an all-Island need and therefore it needs an all-Island approach?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: Sometimes I think I must be a mindreader!

Mr Delaney: Tell us the lottery numbers then!

Mr Karran: Obviously you have lost your mind!

Mrs Crowe: I just felt I might be asked that information and I can tell you exactly. In Ballacubbon there are six sheltered housing units and eight others; in Archallagan, 17; Andreas, 20; Cronk Grianagh, 45; Ballasalla, 35; and 18 flats in Douglas. So as the hon. member can see, they are spread quite widely throughout the Island, from Andreas to Ballasalla. Port Erin at the moment is the exception.

The President: Hon. member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: Eaghtyrane, can the minister tell us: out of these numbers, how many of them are replacements for existing local authority housing? I think that would give a truer picture.

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: I do not believe that any of the ones that I have mentioned are replacements with the

exception of the eight in Clagh Vane out of the 35 new. That is the only one that I can identify personally as being replacement. All the others are new public sector dwellings.

The President: Hon. member for Michael, Mr Cannan.

Mr Cannan: Minister, notwithstanding that you have given us the number of new applications, why are you not fulfilling planning approvals granted for previous applications in respect of 17 houses for the Bretney Estate, which was 1 to 5, service plots, 6 to 13 first-time buyers and 14 to 17 social housing, which received planning approval by your department in October 2000?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Crowe: Indeed, I am proceeding with that scheme. It has been slightly readdressed and I am hoping that it will be in the press within the next 10 days.

Mr Cannan: Thank you.

Dental Service – Negotiation of Remuneration Settlement – Question by Mr Singer

Question 8. The hon. member for Ramsey (Mr Singer) to ask the Minister for Health and Social Security:

Have you negotiated a settlement with the representatives of the dental profession on their future remuneration for health service provision?

The President: In the absence of the hon. member for Ramsey on this occasion I ask Mr Houghton to ask the question.

Mr Houghton: Thank you, Mr President. I beg leave to ask the question, sir.

The President: I call on the Minister for Health and Social Security, Mrs Christian, to reply.

Mrs Christian: Mr President, members will recall that they have previously been informed that the target date for the conclusion of negotiations with the dental profession is April 2003. The hon. member will, together with all other members, have received a paper from the department setting out the current position in relation to the ongoing negotiations with the dental profession on a new National Health Service contract. The paper also details the situation regarding the availability of NHS dental services across the Island including changes introduced or planned in respect of dental service provision.

The President: Mr Houghton.

Mr Houghton: Thank you, Mr President. I am very grateful for the minister's answer and for the paper recently distributed amongst members of Tynwald. However, is the hon. minister aware that the situation is deteriorating, particularly for the people in the north of the Island where senior citizens who have attended the dentist on a regular basis are being refused appointments; mothers cannot get appointments, and this is only the tip of the iceberg, sir? Does the minister realise the effect of the delay on the dental health of the people and that the failure of her department to come to an agreement sooner rather than later is taking away the rights of our citizens to regular and accessible NHS dental care, sir?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Christian: Mr President, I am conscious that the practice in the north of the Island continues to deliver an NHS service. The hon. member has referred to the fact that people are not able to get appointments. I am not aware that anyone who is currently registered is unable to get an appointment. I am conscious that it may take some time to get such an appointment, but of course people do have access to emergency treatment if their situation is an emergency one. There are people who have not retained or maintained their registration by not attending their dentist on a regular basis. It is therefore the case that if they have not continued to maintain their relationship with the dentist in the north of the Island or anywhere else, then their registration lapses.

Mr President, the department has taken steps, as outlined in the paper which has been circulated, to provide an alternative NHS service and continues to do that. Obviously, the consideration of difficulties in the Island is to the forefront in consideration of providing alternatives and that will continue to be the case.

With regard to the hon. member's expression of a wish that negotiations conclude sooner rather than later, I am quite sure that that would be the wish of all of us. However, if the hon. member has noted the comment from the Dental Association in the local press, he will be conscious that the whole approach has now taken a slightly different tack, with both the department and the Dental Association agreeing that they would take outside advice on the issue of the nature of the future contract for dental services, and under those circumstances it is better that we do the job properly, Mr President, than that we come forward with something hastily conceived providing that in the meantime we continue to strive to provide an alternative for those people who find that their dentists are curtailing the NHS provision. My understanding is that in the north they have not curtailed their NHS services, sir.

The President: Hon. member of Council, Mr Lowey.

Mr Lowey: Is the minister aware that the private sector has recently increased its fees for participation in their various schemes? And would the minister agree to

have an advert in the paper with an advice telephone number (**Mr Houghton:** Hear, hear.) where people can actually apply for advice to go into the schemes and alternatives which she has already put in place? I think the general public are looking for advice. I know members have got in touch with me and I have phoned up the department and got the advice, but that information should be in a public document, in the press maybe, like their helpful adverts for pensioners to apply for benefits that they may be entitled to.

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Christian: Mr President, I am not aware of the increase in private fees. That is outwith my remit and that, of course, is something which does not impact on us except that we wish certainly to make sure that there is an alternative NHS provision available to people.

With regard to advice to the public, I am conscious that many people will approach their members and I hope that the information we have provided will enable members to continue to advise their constituents. I will, however, give consideration to the other measure that he has suggested.

The President: Hon. member Mr Houghton.

Mr Houghton: Thank you, Mr President. May I ask the hon. minister if she can make arrangements, whilst there are negotiations taking place, with those dentists, particularly in the Ramsey area, where there is a shorter supply of them, to see that they are co-operating and taking on those patients whilst negotiations are in this phase, sir? I would be very grateful if she would undertake to do that.

The President: Minister.

Mrs Christian: Mr President, the dental practice in the north of the Island is providing NHS facilities to its existing patients. It is not under any obligations at all to take on new patients who have not historically been registered with them. Indeed, part of the argument and part of the whole of this negotiation is that dentists do not want to be overloaded with too large a list of patients in order that they can give what they feel to be satisfactory care to the people on their list. So I do not think it appropriate that the department should put any pressure on the practice to take on additional people who are not currently registered. They will certainly provide emergency care where that is necessary and they do continue, albeit with perhaps longer delays than we would wish, to provide appointment times for their NHS-registered patients. Hon. member, I have already said that we are taking steps to make alternative provision for those who are not registered in the Ramsey Group Practice and we continue to explore other options.

The President: Hon. member of Council, Mr Delaney.

Mr Delaney: Thank you, Mr President. Two supplementaries: does the minister agree with the practice that if you have been fortunate enough not to require dental health for six months, then, if you do have a problem, you have to then go through the whole process of starting again? My second supplementary, if I may: would the minister not agree, as she has mentioned it, that we have a situation where the dentists are doing so well and are so busy that the only answer to this problem is to have more dentists? That is the answer that there seems to be to half the problems we get in relation to the dental problems and other health problems we have in the Island.

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Christian: Mr President, it has been the practice over some years now that if you do not visit your dentist regularly and therefore retain your registration –

Mr Delaney: Why?

Mrs Christian: ‘Why?’ Because the whole philosophy has been to have continuous visits to maintain good oral health i.e. prevention being better than cure. We do want people to visit on a regular but reasonably spaced basis and that is why that was introduced. However, as the hon. member says, the whole objective is to get more dentists to the Isle of Man. In order to do that, we are negotiating what we hope will be an attractive contract for the dentists. They are currently saying it is not attractive –

Mr Delaney: So you agree with me?

Mrs Christian: We have paid them an interim payment to retain their service while these negotiations are going on, and the hon. member - of course I agree with him –

Mr Delaney: Thanks very much.

Mrs Christian: - we do want more dentists. There is nothing rocket science about that. It is clearly what we are about, getting more dentists.

Mr Delaney: Get on with it!

Mrs Christian: Oh, thank you very much, Mr President. We are getting on with it. (*Laughter*)

Mr Delaney: Quickly.

**Social Security –
Initial Support for the Sick –
Question by Mr Henderson**

Question 9. The hon. member for Douglas North (Mr Henderson) to ask the Minister for Health and Social Security:

How does your department propose to help an eligible person who is genuinely ill for the first six months of that illness, where they or their carer do not qualify for attendance allowance, but are nonetheless requiring support?

The President: I call on the hon. member for Douglas North, Mr Henderson.

Mr Henderson: Thank you, Mr President. I beg leave to ask the question standing in my name.

The President: Again, I call on the Minister for Health and Social Security to reply.

Mrs Christian: Yes, Mr President. Attendance allowance goes towards the extra costs of being long-term disabled where the person becomes disabled after the age of 65. To qualify as long-term, a person must have suffered the disability for a period of six months and be expected to suffer it for at least six further months. We do assume when answering the question that the hon. member is referring to financial help. If the incapacitated person is claiming attendance allowance for the first time, he or she will be over the age of 65 and will be entitled to state pension provided that the contribution conditions are satisfied. State pension may be topped up by income support if the pension alone is insufficient to meet the claimant's needs or income support can be paid on its own where an inadequate contribution record results in no title to state pension.

The hon. member refers to the six-month waiting period to qualify for attendance allowance. I can confirm that where income support is payable, it contains an addition known as an attendance premium which covers the six-month waiting period. It will be paid from the date of claim to attendance allowance up to the date of determination of the claim. The amount of attendance premium will be the amount of attendance allowance which it is expected will eventually be awarded. In other words, if you are a low income person, if you make an early claim for attendance allowance you can get a top-up before the six-month period kicks in.

Hon. members, the question also refers to a carer not qualifying for attendance allowance. That benefit is not directed at carers; it is payable to the disabled person. There are options for providing help for carers when the disabled person is not in receipt of any allowance and the carer is not in work. The carer may claim income support in his or her own right or be included in an income support claim or retirement pension claim for the disabled person. Conceivably the carer could be in receipt of a benefit in his or her own right unrelated to the caring rôle such as family income supplement or retirement pension. Much, Mr President, depends on the individual circumstances of the claimant and the carer.

The President: Hon. member for Douglas North, Mr Henderson.

Mr Henderson: Thank you, Mr President. I am grateful for the minister's positive response to my concerns here this morning and I am pleased to learn that there is in existence such a thing as an income support premium which is one of my concerns with my question: how do we cover this six-months gap? Could the minister confirm for me that this premium which she has indicated covers this six-month qualification gap it would be similar, I think she said, to what the actual payment would be after the qualifying period? If she could just confirm that for me because at the minute, sir, I am having some grave concerns expressed to me by my constituents who have contacted the office and nobody has expressed that there is an income support premium available for people in a needy position.

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Christian: Right. If the hon. member could advise me about cases in which they have not been given that advice I would be willing to follow that up.

Mr Henderson: Thank you.

Mrs Christian: However, I will confirm this morning that the amount of attendance premium - that is, the early payment - will be the amount of the attendance allowance which it is expected would eventually be awarded. I would add, though, that they do have to have evidence that they would eventually qualify for the longer-term attendance allowance, i.e. they have to determine and provide evidence that they have a long-term problem and the claim will be considered from the time it is submitted.

Invalid Care Allowance – Tax Liability – Question by Mr Henderson

Question 10. The hon. member for Douglas North (Mr Henderson) to ask the Minister for Health and Social Security:

Will your department be willing to make representations to the Treasury to initiate discussions as to working out a formula for the tax liability of someone who is in receipt of Invalid Care Allowance, making this benefit 'tax exempt?'

The President: I call on the hon. member for Douglas North, Mr Henderson.

Mr Henderson: Thank you, Mr President, I beg leave to ask the question standing in my name.

The President: Again I call on Mrs Christian, Minister for Health and Social Security, to reply.

Mrs Christian: Mr President, the formulation of taxation policy is a matter for the Treasury and

changes to such policy are, of course, subject to the approval of this hon. Court. It is not my place as a Minister for Health and Social Security to make particular representations to the Treasury on its taxation policy of benefits, though I can confirm that when Treasury periodically reviews its taxation policy in relation to benefits it does confer with the department, particularly with regard to technical details.

The President: Hon. member for Douglas North.

Mr Henderson: Thank you, Mr President. In relation to the invalid care allowance, which is classed as an income replacement, not for tax purposes, would the minister not agree with me that carers in receipt of this who are actually offering 24-hour-a-day care for a relative are under extreme stress and are saving the National Health Service a lot of money by keeping a relative at home? Thereby it is quite innocuous that this supplement should be classed for taxation purposes. And further, could she confirm that there is a maximum out of this benefit and it is not a pound for pound replacement of income, but it only goes to a maximum and thereby is not a proper income replacement at all, and would she be prepared further to make representations?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mrs Christian: Mr President, the hon. member has referred to people in receipt of invalid care allowance who may be in difficult financial circumstances. In those circumstances I believe that there are other additional payments that can be made available to them, as I illustrated in my answer. I would also suggest that the chances of them being in the income tax bracket are highly unlikely even if income support in those circumstances is taken into consideration for taxation purposes. I think we have to bear in mind that the whole range of people in receipt of invalid care allowance may be a wide one and, whilst it is appropriate to consider it as an earnings replacement, then I feel it ought to be treated in the same way as any other income, accepting and pointing out that, in the scenario which the hon. member has illustrated, a person on low income, because of their caring responsibilities, very well may fall outside of the taxation bracket.

The President: Hon. member for Douglas North, Mr Henderson.

Mr Henderson: Thank you, Mr President. Could the minister answer, please, if she thinks it is moral and right that a benefit such as invalid care allowance should be subject to taxation and could she answer my previous question that the invalid care allowance, as it is classed as a wage replacement for taxation purposes, does not actually replace wages pound for pound and that there is an actual maximum to that benefit?

The President: Minister, I think you have actually answered the question, but nevertheless if you wish to reply?

Mrs Christian: I will confirm, Mr President, that there is a maximum, and part of the reason is that it is for people to decide whether they are going to be carers for that part of the day or whether they are going to work as well, or to what extent the two are going to be the line that they take. Insofar as it is substituting for income, notwithstanding that there is a cut-off point beyond which it is not adjusted pound for pound, if it is regarded as a replacement for income because the person is not working because they are caring, which seems a reasonable assessment, then it should be taken into account as a taxable income. However, I have given my parameters in relation to low income earlier, Mr President.

**Douglas Harbour –
Refuelling Arrangements for Yachts**

**–
Question by Mr Houghton**

Question 11. The hon. member for Douglas North (Mr Houghton) to ask the Minister for Transport:

What arrangements exist for visiting yachts to refuel at Douglas Harbour?

The President: I call on the hon. member for Douglas North, Mr Houghton.

Mr Houghton: Thank you, Mr President. I beg leave to ask the question standing in my name, sir.

The President: Minister for Transport, hon. member Mr Shimmin to reply.

Mr Shimmin: Thank you, Mr President. The refuelling arrangements that presently exist at all the Island harbours, including Douglas, are those that have always applied: namely, it is the responsibility of the owner or master of the vessel to acquire the required fuel from wherever it may be available. My department recognises that this situation is not the most welcoming for visitors or indeed for residents, and in planning the development of the inner harbour marina we have included a refuelling facility amongst the several distinct schemes that need to be incorporated. Furthermore, to achieve an improved service to all harbour-users, as well as an improved level of supervision, there was a requirement to employ additional staff.

The inner harbour was redeveloped primarily to accommodate locally owned vessels, and there was considerable pressure applied to my department by local boat-owners and politicians to protect this position. Therefore, although the visitors are made welcome and accommodated, they were not intended to be the principal users in the first instance. Consequently, my department took the view that local boat-owners were

aware of the existing situation regarding refuelling and prioritised our other improvements ahead of a refuelling facility. It should be noted that under current department policy, the improvement of leisure craft facilities in Douglas Harbour must be accommodated within my department's revenue budget, and it has therefore been necessary to prioritise expenditure. Development will therefore continue to be made on a phased basis and will incorporate our desire to have a refuelling facility available for all.

The President: Hon. member Mr Houghton.

Mr Houghton: Thank you, Mr President, and I thank the hon. minister for his reply, but can he suggest what visiting yachtspeople do now at this current time? When they visit our wonderful inner harbour and tie up, what do they actually do themselves to refuel? What advice can be given to those people, sir?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mr Shimmin: Yes, Mr President. It is a problem which has occasionally arisen within the department that we are aware of. Thankfully the boating fraternity on the Island have been very accommodating and supportive of the visitors coming to the Island. The nearest red diesel facility is at the White Hoe and that only operates from the hours of 8 o'clock in the morning until 5 o'clock in the evening, and on Saturday from 9 o'clock until 12 o'clock. The next nearest garage is in Union Mills. This is obviously unacceptable for people arriving without any transportation or arriving outside of hours. We are attempting to find mechanisms which will facilitate it better, and indeed our harbour staff will be located in the area of the Tongue and therefore will be there to give better information to those who visit.

Persons requiring petrol or small quantities of diesel can obtain it from garages on the Peel Road which, albeit not satisfactory in the medium term, is the only offer of a suggestion we can make at this stage. So I am grateful for those boat-owners who do help to accommodate the visiting boat people. We are working towards it. It will not be within this financial year. The estimated cost of the facility we propose to develop is in the region of £140,000 and we will get to that as soon as we can, sir.

**Air Transport –
Increase in Flight Cancellations –
Question by Mr Singer**

Question 12. The member for Ramsey (Mr Singer) to ask the Minister for Transport:

- (1) *Has there been an increase in the number of cancellations of Manx Airlines flights both from and to the Island since the British Airways take-over; and*

(2) if so –

- (a) *what is that increase;*
- (b) *which airports have suffered; and*
- (c) *what are the reasons given for the increase?*

The President: In the absence of the hon. member for Ramsey, Mr Singer, I call on the hon. member for Douglas North, Mr Henderson.

Mr Henderson: Thank you, Mr President. I beg leave to ask the question standing in the hon. member Mr Singer's name.

The President: Again I call on the Minister for Transport to reply.

Mr Shimmin: Mr President, in seeking to respond accurately to this question there has been a difficulty in that my staff at the airport do not keep separate details of cancelled flights, only records of the flights that actually take place. As the information required concerns a commercial company, it would be wrong of me to give a potentially inaccurate picture of that operation. Therefore I requested the company to supply the information required in the question, and they have readily responded with detailed information regarding the performance since 1st April 2002. The company have agreed this information can be made public at this point, and I am circulating to each member of Tynwald and the press the information provided which, with your permission, Mr President, will be just before the adjournment.

The highlights are as follows in response to the four parts of the question. Question (1): yes, there has been an increase up from the airline's own target of no more than 1.5 per cent of flights being cancelled to a figure of 2.4 per cent for the period up to 9th June 2002. Going on to question (2), this figure of 2.4 per cent amounts to 72 flights out of 2,978 flights scheduled to take place between 1st April and 9th June. There were cancellations on most routes, with the exception of Manchester and the Isle of Man to Southampton and the Isle of Man to Luton. All other routes suffered cancellations, and in percentage terms the worst effected were Belfast City at 8.3 per cent, Southampton to Isle of Man at 3.8 per cent, Isle of Man to Leeds, Bradford at 2.8 per cent, Birmingham at 2.7 per cent and Isle of Man to Liverpool at 2.4 per cent. The company advise me that a variety of factors have adversely affected their service ability and reliability, including lightning strikes, engine failure, damage to aircraft by ground equipment (not on the Isle of Man), cabin crew shortages and air traffic control failures (again, not on the Isle of Man).

If I may go on to say, Mr President, that along with my colleague, Mr Cretney, Minister for Tourism and Leisure, I met with representatives of the airline on Friday last. This meeting had been scheduled in advance of this question being tabled. During a frank and open

discussion they readily expressed their own disappointment and concern that they were not meeting their own targets in respect of flight cancellations. However, they also assured me that they have already put in place a number of measures designed to improve the situation including, firstly, no longer rotating a variety of Jetstream 41 aircraft through the Isle of Man, but rather basing the same aircraft here, which will improve engineering reliability; also continuing to sub-charter additional back-up aircraft capacity at Manchester and bringing that aircraft over to the Isle of Man to cover as needed; thirdly, to increase crew numbers at both Manchester and Birmingham to avoid the need to move crews to the right position when an aircraft is unavailable.

Mr President, I have attempted to provide the information requested in the question. However, I do not stand here as an apologist for the Manx Airlines company. Like everyone I am not satisfied, and I will maintain the pressure on the company to improve their quality of service and reliability. The company knows clearly what is expected and its responsibility to the Isle of Man. Assurances are one thing, but I will maintain regular contact to ensure that the improvements are achieved which the company has professed as being their ambition, sir.

The President: Hon. member for Douglas North, Mr Henderson.

Mr Henderson: Thank you, Mr President. I thank the minister for his response and his assurances that he will keep the pressure on this company to supply the services that this community requires. Will he agree with me that the current service is less than what it has been under the original Manx Airlines flag and that what is happening to some extent is that the original Manx Airlines aircraft and the numbers and the staff and so on are being used as a back-stop to plug holes for other BA operations (**Mr Houghton:** Hear, hear.) elsewhere and that things have been taken away from the Isle of Man, and this is a serious situation? Would he also agree with me that we are but a mere speck on the corporate map of British Airways and, consequent upon that, is the minister aware that in the internet, for example, from North America for residents wishing to visit the Island, or indeed for people ringing the London office of BA to check about London flights to the Isle of Man, they are told that none exist? Is he aware of that and what can he do about that to promote the Island?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mr Shimmin: Yes, Mr President, I do not wish anybody to have the understanding that the department does not take seriously the problems currently being encountered by the passengers travelling to and from the Island. Particular concern is regarding the passengers travelling away under the DHSS for medical treatment (**Mr Henderson:** Hear, hear.) and it is one that, as all hon. members and the public are aware, is unsatisfactory. It is certainly true that it is less of a

service than we are used to expecting under Manx Airlines. (**Mr Henderson:** Hear, hear.) It is quite clear that the operation and the restructuring of British Airways, which reduced the number of planes based on the Isle of Man from five to four, has had a serious impact on the flexibility of the company to be able to deal with any problems when they arise. It is something which the department and our conversations, which are ongoing and regular with the company, expressed most seriously and, to their credit, the company have not attempted to try and excuse their actions; they have admitted that they are providing an unsatisfactory quality and reliability of service. They are an important supplier of air routes to the Isle of Man. Therefore, it is incumbent upon me in my position to maintain a dialogue and to work with this organisation, but we are all aware that since the takeover our influence is less than it has been previously.

The issue of decision-making in an organisation which has stripped out so many members of staff and aircraft throughout its routes means that there was always going to be a period of time when the service would dip. Albeit unacceptable, that is the commercial reality of the restructuring that is taking place. We are aware of limitations with regard to the marketing of the Isle of Man and, in dialogue with the company, we are attempting to ensure that when 1st September arrives and BA take over the full Manx Airlines operation, there will be an opportunity for marketing of the Island through the literature available on the planes.

Mr President, we are all aware of the problems. We are attempting to work seriously with the company. We are aware of the morale problems within the staff and a period of uncertainty. (**Mr Henderson:** Hear, hear.) We are doing everything that we can to try and make this an improvement. Albeit that we have lost a considerable amount, we are hoping to try and minimise the impact.

The President: Hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

Mrs Hannan: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. Could I ask the Minister for Transport whether, due to the delays and changes that have come about, there has been an increase in cost to the Department of Transport?

The President: Minister to reply.

Mr Shimmin: The main increase in cost to the department has not just been through British Airways but through all airport operators and the request on numerous occasions for delayed flights to keep the airport open longer. This causes considerable problems with regard to the staffing implications, the wages that go out, but also the hours that are being required to work of air traffic control, baggage handlers, fire crews and all associated with the operating of an airport. We are having dialogue with the airlines about this matter, because at present all members of Tynwald are possibly aware that we have a final cut-off in theory of 9.30 pm

and yet there have been many occasions caused by delays to flights and the relocation of aircraft to fulfil the obligations, and that means that we, as the staff at the airport, are having to come under increasing pressure and the department to increase costs, sir.

The President: Hon. member for Douglas North, Mr Henderson.

Mr Henderson: Thank you, Mr President. Would the minister if necessary, apart from his good intentions with himself and hon. colleague, minister Cretney, make representations through the Isle of Man Government, the Council of Ministers and push concerns to the highest degree possible in pursuing this issue for the good of the community of this Island? Would he also give an undertaking that currently, where the London connections to the Isle of Man are not being advertised on the British Airways internet from North America and indeed the London Office of British Airways are telling passengers there is not a Gatwick link, to look into that and have the situation rectified as soon as is practicable?

Mrs Hannan: Hear, hear.

The President: Minister to reply.

Mr Shimmin: I am more than happy to do that, Mr President. For the information of members, the select committee that was appointed by the House of Keys has recently visited Jersey and Guernsey. At that time I took the opportunity of gaining approval to attend a meeting with the Minister of Aviation of the United Kingdom Government, which takes place on July 8th. Members may be aware that this is one that was scheduled for about a month ago and was cancelled at short notice by the UK Government. I will therefore be taking issues up, along with the Channel Islands, concerning factors that affect the routes into and from the Island.

The issue regarding the BA publicity is one which I believe is unacceptable but is a low enough priority for that organisation, although it is a high priority for the Isle of Man. It is one which I am assured will improve; however, I do not believe in the reorganisation and the serious staffing problems that they still have whilst they are in the process of making several thousand of their employees throughout their system redundant or seeking further employment. I believe some of these issues have not been addressed. We will put pressure upon them to do that in a timely fashion.

Several Members: Hear, hear.

The President: Hon. member of Council, Mr Waft.

Mr Waft: Thank you, Mr President. Would the minister explain the delay in establishing the Manx Transport Users Consultative Committee for carriers offering regular passenger and freight services to and

from the Island? This was accepted by Tynwald Court in July 1999 following a select committee report. The members included Mr Gelling, Mr Brown, Mr Downie, Mr Cretney, Mr Cannan and myself. That committee, for your information, sir, was establishing the problems with timetabling of services, fare structures, special fares, provision of information on services, including information on cancellations, delay or alteration of services, reliability, punctuality of services, the number of customer complaints received in specified periods, et cetera. It seems not to have seen the light of day since that committee reported who had given it deliberation over a period of 12 months. The whole of Tynwald Court accepted it, it went to the Department of Transport and we have not seen it yet. Perhaps the minister might like to take that on board and I have the information for him if he would care to look at it. Thank you, Mr President.

The President: Minister.

Mr Shimmin: Thank you, Mr President. The hon. member for Council did forewarn me five minutes before we walked into the chamber this morning he would be raising this issue. It is one where we do have a Harbour Users Association and I have just initiated a Greenway Rights of Way Users Association for protection of the hill-lands and uplands. It is one where the principle sounds wonderful and I can endorse it entirely. I will need to revisit the select committee report; however, when the former member of that select committee runs off a list of areas that can be accommodated by such legislation I do believe I will put a note of caution down. Having attended Jersey and Guernsey, where they have an aviation licensing authority, it is fair to say that by having such a body it implies that that body has total control over all factors affecting aviation. Likewise, when we go down this route, which has been approved and therefore will be reactivated by my department as soon as I get back there this afternoon, it is one where I would hate the hon. Court to consider it is likely that this will be able to control all of that list of issues that the hon. member for Council has just identified. I will take it up with the member of Council and my department as soon as I can, sir.

The President: Hon. member of Council, Mr Crowe.

Mr Crowe: Mr President, thank you. Can I ask the minister, is he aware of the concerns expressed about the changes of timings to the Dublin routes which are affecting business people wanting to spend a day in Dublin or vice versa? It is causing concern among Irish-based businesses here.

The President: Minister.

Mr Shimmin: Yes, Mr President. The changes to Manx Airlines, British Airways since the purchase is one which has not gone unnoticed by the department; therefore, contingency plans were already in operation prior to my arrival at the department, where we looked at a route-by-route contingency plan. I

can announce to the Court that at the moment there are two operators currently pursuing the possible reintroduction of the Isle of Man/Jersey route following the Manx Airlines withdrawal there in March, and similarly there are up to four airlines that we are in discussions with and they are evaluating the opportunity of providing morning and evening Isle of Man/Dublin flights following the BA decision to downsize that route. We are graphically aware of all the problems caused to tourists, Isle of Man residents and the business sector. The ability of the airline industry is one where they can move quite quickly to plug some of these gaps. However, it is not overnight. We know where their weaknesses are; we are attempting to work with other operators to fill some of those gaps.

Mr Delaney: Hear, hear.

(See TQ 152 for further information subsequently supplied to members)

**Sub-Post Offices –
Future Policy for –
Question by Mrs Hannan**

Question 13. The hon. member for Peel (Mrs Hannan) to ask the Chairman of the Post Office:

- (1) *Is there a future for sub-post offices; and*
- (2) *does your authority have a policy for the future?*

The President: I call on the hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

Mrs Hannan: Eaghtyrane, I beg leave to ask the question standing in my name.

The President: I call on the Chairman of the Post Office, hon. member for Ayre, Mr Quine, to reply.

Mr Quine: Thank you, Mr President. This matter has received the close attention of myself and my colleagues since our appointment to the Post Office board in January of this year. I am also aware that a report and recommendations were made to the then Council of Ministers in mid 2001.

It is significant to note that whilst the network of sub-post offices has remained largely unaltered for years, the economic climate and social attributes and habits have changed dramatically. Through the rapid development of information technology, people are now able to access quickly and cheaply a wide range of alternative communication and banking and payment services that are the core business of the Post Office. It is an inescapable fact that the economics of operating a network of over 30 post offices throughout the Island will become increasingly difficult for both Isle of Man post and those operating sub-post offices. To take but one measure of comparison, the ratio of post offices to population in the Isle of Man is substantially greater

than that found in comparable areas in the United Kingdom. New services and sources of business have been and are being introduced into post offices, but these cannot fully compensate for business that is lost to the competitive force of technology. Some 64 per cent of all new retirement pensions are now paid direct to recipient bank accounts at a fraction of the cost of payment over the post office counter. Post office customers are becoming more demanding, expecting instant access and longer opening hours from post offices and their associated business.

As a general statement, I believe it is unrealistic to expect clients of the Isle of Man Post Office to bear additional costs when cheaper alternatives are available. It is acknowledged that people perceive post offices-cum-village shops to be an essential part of the community and are aggrieved when some of them close. Customer habits, however, do not support that perception, and post offices and shops are often treated as a convenience store. It is not for the Isle of Man Post Office alone to deal with the wider social issues; neither is it realistic to expect the Post Office to bear the deficit attached to sub-post offices which for 2001-2002 was in excess of £275,000.

That said, there is in my view a future for a revitalised network of sub-post offices. Opportunities will exist to make post offices an access point for government services and other services, although this will ultimately impact on other areas of our business. It is a matter for further discussion between government and the Post Office as to where the cost of social services provided by the Post Office falls.

Isle of Man Post has not been complacent and has confronted these issues. I would confirm that we have a clear, robust policy regarding the future of our business, aimed at safeguarding jobs, maintaining customer satisfaction and withstanding ever-increasing competition. Much work is going on at the moment with sub-postmasters, customers and departments of government to further develop a strategy that ensures a long-term sustainable future for post offices. The Post Office will be seeking to further discuss a number of the these issues with the Council of Ministers later this year.

The President: Hon. member for Rushen, Mr Gill.

Mr Gill: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. Would the Chairman of the Post Office please advise where the comparable areas in the UK to which he referred are?

Mr Quine: Certainly. They are taking averages of rural area, combined with small towns in the United Kingdom.

The President: Hon. member for Douglas North, Mr Houghton.

Mr Houghton: Thank you, Mr President. May I ask, is the hon. Chairman of the Post Office aware that there is indeed a growing unease regarding the future financial security of sub-postmasters, who themselves

are stakeholders in this business and always have been stakeholders in that business and that the Sub-Postmasters Federation appears to be helpless in its quest to maintain a sound footing with the continual procrastination of post office management. May I ask, therefore, would he agree, perhaps, to meet with those concerned sub-postmasters, of which there are quite a number, together with concerned members of Tynwald and which could therefore be chaired by, say, the hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan, in order to reach a satisfactory level of negotiation and discussion before this infrastructure in our Island collapses, sir? (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) This is most important.

The President: Hon. member for Ayre.

Mr Quine: There are three or four points there, if I may, sir.

First of all, of course, the matter of whether or not we would be prepared to meet with the sub-postmasters: the new board has been round during the first two months of them assuming office to see all sub-postmasters and to receive a briefing from all the sub-postmasters. Dialogue, of course, with the sub-postmasters is conducted through the union which represents virtually all the sub-postmasters. It is only a matter of about three weeks, I think it is, since we last met and had our last discussions with the sub-postmasters, represented through their union. I have made it clear that, in terms of any individuals, although, as I say, we have been to see them all, but if there is a matter of receiving considered information from individuals, I have no problem with that, but I would have a problem with trying to negotiate with several parties representing the one body. That, I think, would be a recipe for getting little done.

The financial security aspect is part and parcel of the study to which I have referred. There is a whole list of matters which affect the network of sub-post offices, including those aspects directly impacting upon the sub-postmasters themselves: the return they get from their business, the arrangements under which they provide their business, and that is part and parcel of the ongoing discussions with the sub-postmasters. I recognise that many of them are stakeholders. They provide premises from which they operate their post offices, and that is taken account of in the remuneration which they receive. It should be pointed out that sub-postmasters are self-employed individuals who have entered into a contract with the Post Office. Postmasters obviously will consider the merits of the terms of the contract before they enter into that contract. There is a great deal of work to be done in terms of addressing the significant number of matters affecting the chain of sub-post offices. That is the process we are going through. It is not a process that is going to be completed overnight.

I totally reject the suggestion that there is procrastination. The problem here is, in large part, that there are several parties: the government on the one side; the Post Office with its obligations to run an efficient Post Office; postmasters; postal workers themselves - there are several parties all with interests,

not all of which are parallel, and these have to be discussed with them and we have to come up with a solution to these various problems.

The President: Hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

Mrs Hannan: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. It would seem, would the chair not agree, that his stance is really the heavy hand of the Post Office saying, 'This is what will happen, we are discussing these issues,' but leaving out the important people who are running the sub-post offices especially when they are in difficulties. (**Mr Houghton:** Hear, hear.) They have problems with holiday leave and there are a number of issues - expecting them to stay open longer and all of those sort of issues - that surely should be discussed with the people that are being affected by these changes, and surely this should not be a partnership - the Post Office working with the sub-post offices. Would the chair not agree?

The President: Member for Ayre to reply.

Mr Quine: I certainly agree that there is a partnership which has to be developed, maintained, if the Post Office is to be effective - there is no doubt about that - but I reject out of hand the suggestion that in any way I have adopted a heavy-handed approach towards the Post Office. I have explained that we have got on-going discussions with them which were initiated by the new board going round and seeing each and every one of them and giving them an opportunity to directly give us their views, and those views have been taken on board as part of these discussions. The hon. member has referred to holiday leave; she may or may not be aware, of course, that this is a matter which has been very recently discussed with the union and there has been an agreement reached on that matter.

The President: Hon. member for Middle, Mr Quayle.

Mr Quayle: Thank you, Mr President. A lot of people rely heavily on the use of post offices, particularly the elderly and especially those in rural areas where there are few shops available. They provide vital services, provisions and the means of social contact, which assists in the wellbeing of those utilising them. Could I ask the chairman if he will do everything possible, then, to work with the sub-post offices and interested parties - and I notice that he mentioned the Council of Ministers - in order to retain the vital services of post offices in rural communities.

The President: Hon. member for Ayre.

Mr Quine: Yes, of course I will, and that is what we are doing, but there are issues that have to be resolved before we can move into what will be, perhaps, a more viable strategy for the future. I recognise the importance of the sub-post office in terms of its contribution to the social aspects of small

communities, but at the same time we also have to consider who is going to carry the cost of that. As I have intimated, all but a handful of post offices, in pure business terms, are not profitable. There is a cost, therefore, to be carried. If the Post Office shift that cost to the more profitable aspects of the Post Office and if that is to be adopted as its policy, then we are going to put at risk the profitability of the organisation as a whole and consequently there is this issue of discussing and agreeing with the Council of Ministers as to who carries the costs for the social duties which presently fall upon the Post Office?

The President: Hon. member for Douglas North.

Mr Houghton: Thank you, Mr President. The hon. member made allusion to a report and recommendations that went to the Council of Ministers in mid-2001. Can I ask if the new board that took over this year concur with all of those recommendations? And also, may I ask, could they be disclosed to members of Tynwald, the report and recommendations, because I do like to insist that there are very serious problems in the Post Office, they need to be dealt with now, and it does not appear that these issues are being dealt with in a transparent manner. And if I may ask also, what the hon. chairman would like to say if we have a discussion or a debate in this hon. Court in the future to discuss the issues of the Post Office, perhaps having possession of the likes of those background papers to see what has actually taken place behind the scenes that nobody on the front line knows anything about, sir?

The President: Hon. member, I think you should reply in relation to the papers; the rest is a matter of opinion and, as any member knows, they can raise any matter on the floor of this House by putting it on the order paper in a proper manner.

Mr Houghton: Thank you, sir.

The President: Hon. member for Ayre.

Mr Quine: The report that went to the Council of Ministers led to an independent study which was conducted, really essentially, on behalf of the Council of Ministers to carry forward the matters identified with the Post Office and their report to the Council of Ministers. That report was initially considered during the dying days of the last administration and has been revisited by the new board. In addition to that, as I have intimated, we are having a fresh look at a number of matters, the new board, of course, in some respects, not only wanting to familiarise themselves with some of these complex problems but also reserving the right to take, perhaps, a somewhat different view on some of the proposed solutions. If the Council of Ministers wish to sanction the release of that report, then that is not a matter of any great concern. I would have thought it would have been more important for us, as a Post Office, to come up, as a product of the present

discussions, with a paper indicating a strategy for the future and then let us have a debate on that.

Mr Houghton: Hear, hear.

The President: Hon. member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: Eaghtyrane, would the Chairman of the Post Office not agree that this Court wants a balance, not the previous imbalance where it was almost a licence to print money as far as to own a post office was concerned?

Mr Houghton: Anything but, Peter.

Mr Karran: Eaghtyrane, would the chairman not agree that we want to see a balance? It was a total imbalance at one time; it was ridiculous, the money that was being paid out to sub-post offices in the past. And would he not also agree that this should be seen as an opportunity, especially when we have the absurdity that we cannot take on people because of the man-head restrictions, for the Council of Ministers to do a thorough investigation of using this facility to give a fair return for the work that is done and also to be able to be used, maybe, to see if there are things that could be devolved to post office levels that are done by central government at the present time? And could he inform this hon. House, has that opportunity been taken by the Council of Ministers in their report to do so, Eaghtyrane?

The President: Hon. member for Ayre.

Mr Quine: I think there are three comments I would make there, sir. Over the last two years a number of government services have, in effect, been passed on and are now dispensed through the Post Office and I am sure hon. members know which service to which I am referring. So that is an on-going process and in fact we are looking at, I think, two or three more services at the moment. We are seeking to compensate for the loss which arises through the move into new technology by producing additional business from government and from the private sector. We are also providing services now for a number of banks, for example. So that process is on-going, but I think hon. members also have to recognise that there are quite dramatic changes in postal services throughout the whole of Europe, and these not only affect, of course, Europe proper but not least the UK, and we can all see (**Mr Cretney:** Hear, hear.) very quickly what has happened in the UK by having the absence of what I would suggest is a proper commercial approach to the conducting of this business and, at the same time, striking a proper balance in meeting the social needs that may legitimately be provided through the Post Office (**Two Members:** Hear, hear.). The one thing that we do not want to do is to be rushed into providing some kind of a half-hearted solution that in its totality does not represent a proper future for the Post Office for years to come, and it has got to be done

properly, it has got to be done in a considered form and it has got to be done against the realisation that unless we can compete, then not only will the sub-post offices have difficult times ahead, the Post Office as a whole could have difficult times ahead, and it is my commitment to ensure the health of the Post Office for the future.

The President: Hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

Mrs Hannan: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. In relation to the question, could I ask the chair of the Post Office if he sees a timescale for further discussions with the sub-post offices and coming forward with a solution, or at least looking for a solution, for the future and, when he is in the process of doing that, would he meet with the post offices, as the member for Douglas North has suggested, with someone independent chairing a meeting, not so that it is going to be confrontational but to try to look for a response so that we do have post offices in the future (**Mr Houghton:** Hear, hear.) and so that we have post offices in rural areas. In the west we have lost a post office in recent times and it could be, Eaghtyrane, that we will be losing more.

Mr Houghton: Hear, hear.

The President: Hon. member for Ayre.

Mr Quine: Well, of course, I chair a board but, speaking for myself as chairman, I have made my position quite clear. The sub-postmasters, the vast majority of them, are represented through a union and we are negotiating and have successfully negotiated with them and that is ongoing. If any individuals who feel that there are matters particular to their post office which they feel are not being put forward through their union, I am prepared to see those individuals and receive the information for them. For my part I am not prepared to enter into multi-faceted negotiations with different parties representing the interested parties of the sub-post offices. That would be a recipe for disaster.

House of Manannan – Neglected State of Overflow Car Park – Question by Mrs Hannan

Question 14. The hon. member for Peel (Mrs Hannan) to ask the member of the Manx Museum and Manx National Trust:

Why has the overflow car parking area that services the House of Manannan been left in such a run-down and neglected state?

The President: I call on the hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

Mrs Hannan: I beg leave to ask the question standing in my name.

The President: Hon. members, on this occasion I call on the hon. member for Rushen, Mr Gill, to reply.

Mr Gill: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. The area in question has not been neglected and has been subject to a number of evaluations for alternative use since its acquisition by Manx National Heritage (MNH). The original surface inherited with the acquisition has benefitted from the removal of a considerable amount of debris and temporary repairs by MNH to enable the area to operate to the advantage of visitors to Peel by providing an overflow car parking facility.

The President: Hon. member for Peel.

Mrs Hannan: I wonder if the member has looked at this area and would he be satisfied whether this area is neglected and rundown or whether it is in actual fact an overflow car park?

The President: Hon. member for Rushen.

Mr Gill: The area in question, as I have said, is in ownership now of Manx National Heritage, but also joins a number of other land ownerships in the area, which partly explains why the area has not been fully developed as a formal car parking facility. Since the area came into MNH ownership, a number of land ownership and usage situations have been required to be resolved following the removal by MNH of a large number of decaying and derelict vehicle and boat structures which previously littered the area. In addition, MNH have installed new curbs to the site and have laid a significant amount of hard core surfacing material to provide for the public amenity of a temporary car park.

The reasons for an apparent delay in finalising the usage of this site are as follows: (1) the finalisation of site ownership boundaries; (2) the construction of the Department of the Trade and Industry's industrial starter units required construction access across the site; (3) a wayleave across the site to service the industrial units had to be negotiated; (4) the future and restoration works of the former brickworks office at the entrance to the site needed to be concluded before final works could be actioned; and finally (5) the area was reserved as a potential site for the Manx National Heritage large objects store construction, which was recently provided with Tynwald support for location elsewhere. Costly resurfacing of this area has not been considered to be in the best interests of the taxpayer if it was imminently to be built upon.

Having satisfactorily concluded the purchase of a separate storage facility, MNH will develop proposals for the improvement of the site for the future. The scale and progression of any scheme will be dependent on the necessary funding being available.

Whilst it is acknowledged that at this time the surface is not ideal, it would be quite wrong to describe it as neglected. MNH is always vigilant with regard to the exclusion of abandoned vehicles or other material and the site has been a very helpful facility for

alternative additional car parking for visitors to the House of Manannan and has been made freely available by MNH to assist with Peel's car parking problems during other events in Peel, such as the traditional boat weekends, and most recently, the Honda Day during the TT festival where very valuable use was made of this MNH property.

Manx National Heritage consider that it is better to allow the area to be used for parking in its current state than to fence it off until the funds are available to considerably improve the quality of car parking.

The President: Hon. member for Peel.

Mrs Hannan: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. Could I ask the member if the Manx Museum and National Trust do not have funds already to resurface this area? And I would encourage the member to go and look at this particular area. It is neglected; it is full of weeds, as are some of the buildings roundabout which are under the ownership of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

A Member: Oh! (*Laughter*)

Mr Downie: Get it sprayed!

Mrs Hannan: No, I am talking about the weeds in the gutters. But this area has been left ever since the House of Manannan was completed, and is the member saying that use on two days such as traditional boats and the Honda Day, two days in the whole of the year, when I believe this would have encouraged anyone to stay on, is satisfactory use of this land when it is very valuable land that could be used for other purposes? And would the member also not agree that people are not going to park on this area full of weeds because they do not know what it is. It has no notice up, it does not need to be fenced; all it needs to do is have a proper preparation, cover and marked out as a car park, and then people would use it when visiting the House of Manannan.

The President: Hon. member for Rushen, Mr Gill.

Mr Gill: Thank you, Eaghtyrane. The hon. member has me at a slight disadvantage, in that the last time I visited the site it was barely visible because it was covered in motorbikes on Honda Day, and I think that is a reflection of a valuable service that MNH did provide. I accept the observation that that is for two days but I would reiterate that that is a service that MNH are providing freely and willingly. I can advise that the cost, provisionally, for drainage, surfacing, et cetera is in the region of £80,000, and I will certainly convey the concerns that the hon. member has raised about the state of the area and the signage back to Manx National Heritage and I will ask them to advise you of any intentions that they have to remedy the shortfalls that you describe.

The President: Hon. member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: Eaghtyrane, would the member for MNH not agree that the overflow car park that services the House of Manannan is not the only thing that is left run down and in a neglected state? And would he also not agree that the issue of protecting this is important when the likes of the grain store should have been protected in order to keep the surrounding area up? And has his trust any concerns that the Council of Ministers were not prepared to purchase this grain store and turn it into office accommodation - it is Station Place in Peel - which would have helped the area surrounding this facility? And would he not agree that this just contradicts what policies come out of the Council of Ministers when they talk about getting things out of Douglas as far as this facility is concerned? And will he ask his body to make a statement as far as the grain store is concerned, as this is another building that has been left to rot which will detract from that area?

The President: Hon. members, I understand the hon. member for Onchan's concern about the grain store but I do not find that in any way attributable to car parking. Hon. member for Peel, a final supplementary. No? Okay. In that case hon. members, that brings us to conclusion the oral part of the question paper.

As I indicated before, the remaining questions, which have been for written answer, the answers will be circulated to you shortly. I have also received the paper referred to by the hon. transport minister, Mr Shimmin, in relation to his reply to question 12, and that paper will equally be circulated to all members at this time.

**Jovelli Limited – Beneficial Owners –
Question by Mr Karran
for Written Answer**

Question 15. The hon. member for Onchan (Mr Karran) to ask the Chief Minister:

Jovelli Limited is paid £425,844 plus £43,200 per annum for Finch Hill House. Can you say who are the beneficial owners of Jovelli Limited?

Answer

Jovelli Limited is a company incorporated on the Isle of Man having its registered office situate at Rosemary House, Mount Havelock, Douglas, Isle of Man.

The sole shareholder in Jovelli Limited is recorded as Forward Management Limited, a company incorporated on the Isle of Man having its registered office situate, on the date of the last annual return of Jovelli Limited, at 2, Albert Street, Douglas, Isle of Man.

There is no Isle of Man legislation requiring the registration of the beneficial ownership of shareholdings with the Isle of Man companies registry.

**Government Office Accommodation –
Expenditure on Rents –
Question by Mr Karran
for Written Answer**

Question 16. The hon. member for Onchan (Mr Karran) to ask the Chief Minister:

Can you say how much public money is spent annually on property rented by government for offices for civil servants?

Answer

£2,772,647.20 is spent annually on property rented by government for offices for civil servants.

**Goldie House – Rental Payments –
Question by Mr Karran
for Written Answer**

Question 17. The hon. member for Onchan (Mr Karran) to ask the Chief Minister:

Are you aware that in a written reply to me from the Treasury, dated 14th May 2002, it was stated that MP Realty Services Limited is paid £136,000 per annum by the Department of Local Government and the Environment for Goldie House; as MP Realty Services Limited was subject to a members' voluntary winding-up and is now dissolved, can you say when the last payment of rent was made to MP Realty Services Limited?

Answer

The Financial Supervision Committee made a payment to MP Realty Services Limited in August 1999. That was the final payment made to that firm in respect of Goldie House.

**Mount Murray Development –
Company Shareholders and
Beneficial Owners –
Question by Mr Karran
for Written Answer**

Question 18. The hon. member for Onchan (Mr Karran) to ask the Chief Minister:

(1) Are you aware that Mr Paul Moore is a Director of Jermyn Limited and that the shareholders are Claycroft and Dalecroft Limited are involved in companies at the Mount Murray Development;

- (2) *further, can you say who are the beneficial owners of Jermyn Limited, Claycroft Limited and Dalecroft Limited?*

Answer

- (1) I have assumed that the reference to Jermyn Limited should be to Jermyn Developments Limited. I was not aware that a Mr Paul Moore was a director of Jermyn Limited or of any connection with the Mount Murray development.

According to the latest records in companies registry, the shares are held by Jermyn Investment Co. Holdings of London, having been transferred from Claycroft Limited and Dalecroft Limited which no longer hold shares in this company.

- (2) No.

**Douglas –
Government Rented Properties
at 27 and 29 Prospect Hill –
Question by Mr Karran
for Written Answer**

Question 19. The h.on. member for Onchan (Mr Karran) to ask the Chief Minister:

- (1) *Can you confirm that 27 and 29 Prospect Hill are being rented by government from Jermyn Investments Limited at an annual rent of £169,000;*
- (2) *further, are you aware that 27 and 29 Prospect Hill were bought by Jermyn Investments Limited on 5th February 1999 from Epworth Limited, a company controlled by Graham Ferguson Lacey, for £430,000; and*
- (3) *can you say why government did not buy 27 and 29 Prospect Hill from Epworth Limited in 1999?*

Answer

- (1) The new development at 27 and 29 Prospect Hill (i.e. Prospect House) is being rented by the Department of Local Government and the Environment (DLGE) at an annual rent of £169,000 from Jermyn Developments Limited and *not* Jermyn Investments Limited.
- (2) The former 27 and 29 Prospect Hill properties were purchased on 5th February 1999 by Jermyn Developments Limited and *not* Jermyn Investments Limited from Epworth Limited for £430,000. Mr Graham Ferguson Lacey was the director of Epworth Limited, which has been dissolved.

- (3) If DLGE had bought 27 and 29 Prospect Hill, it would have still had to demolish the existing buildings and construct the new office block currently on-site.

The DLGE's first priority with regard to obtaining capital funding is for housing and not purchasing or building offices.

**Rose Estates Limited –
Shareholders and Beneficial Owners –
Question by Mr Karran
for Written Answer**

Question 20. The hon. member for Onchan (Mr Karran) to ask the Chief Minister:

- (1) *Are you aware that Rose Estates Limited is paid in rent by Government £548,868 annually for office space in Victory House and Hillary House;*
- (2) *further, are you aware that, according to the Annual Return dated 31st August 2001 filed at Companies Registry, that Rose Estates Limited has the majority shares of 99,999 out of a total of 200,000 issued, are held by Rosedale Worldwide Holdings Inc. of Comosa Building, Samuel Lewis Ave, Panama; and*
- (3) *can you say who are the beneficial owners of Rose Estates Limited and Rosedale Worldwide Holdings Inc?*

Answer

- (1) The Department of Local Government and the Environment (DLGE) rents accommodation in Victory House – total rental is £186,920 per annum. The Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) rents Hillary House and their rent is £257,200 per annum.
- (2) According to the annual return dated 31st August 2001 filed at companies registry: Rose Estates Limited – of the 100,000 shares issued, 99,000 are held by Rosedale Worldwide Holding Inc. of Panama.
- (3) No.

**Invalid Care Allowance –
Estimate of Tax Levied –
Question by Mr Henderson
for Written Answer**

Question 21. The h.on. member for Douglas North (Mr Henderson) to ask the Minister for the Treasury:

What is the estimate of the tax returns collected by your offices during the tax year 2001-02 in respect of tax levied on Invalid Care Allowance?

Answer

During the income tax year ended 5th April 2002, 286 claimants received Invalid Care Allowance payments totalling £501,090. If all claimants had a liability to income tax, then the maximum tax charge would be £60,130 (£501,090 @ 12 per cent), assuming all income was charged at the standard rate.

Evidence obtained from a sample check of Invalid Care Allowance claimants shows that 57 per cent of cases have no liability to income tax. On this basis, it is estimated that income tax levied on Invalid Care Allowance in respect of 2001-02 assessments will amount to approximately £34,300 (57 per cent of £60,130).

**Invalid Care Allowance –
Classification –
Question by Mr Henderson
for Written Answer**

Question 22. The hon. member for Douglas North (Mr Henderson) to ask the Minister for the Treasury:

Can you explain why invalid care allowance is classed as an earnings replacement benefit and why it is subject to tax?

Answer

In order for a carer to obtain invalid care allowance, the carer must:

- care for the disabled person for at least 35 hours per week;
- be between the ages of 16 and 65 at the date of the claim;
- not be earning more than £72 per week after allowable expenses; and
- not be in full-time education of more than 21 hours per week.

The payment of invalid care allowance is therefore, in essence, being made to individuals who would normally be available for employment, but who, due to the carer rôle they have taken on, have been required to remove themselves from the employment market, resulting in their earning capacity being reduced. These payments are intended to replace, to some extent, the income the carers have foregone while engaged in their carer duties.

The benefit was first introduced in 1976 and the payments are treated, for income tax purposes, in the same manner as the income that the payments are intended to replace, and therefore they have always been a taxable income, both in the Isle of Man and the UK.

**Financial Supervision Commission –
Post-Holders' Salaries –
Question by Mr Karran
for Written Answer**

Question 23. The hon. member for Onchan (Mr Karran) to ask the Minister for the Treasury:

In respect of the Financial Supervision Commission, will you please advise:

- (a) *the annual salary in respect of the posts of Chief Executive, Head of Companies Supervision, Head of Enforcement and Head of Operations; and*
- (b) *undertake to make arrangements for the annual publication of this information on the same basis that other civil service and public sector pay scales are made known?*

Answer

- (a) The Chief Executive's non-pensionable salary is £165,000.

The salaries of the heads of divisions in the Financial Supervision Commission referred to above fall into the following bands:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| £70,000 - £80,000 | Head of Companies Supervision |
| £60,000 - £70,000 | Nobody is in this range |
| £50,000 - £60,000 | Head of Enforcement and Head of Operations |

- (b) Arrangements will be made for the annual publication of these senior salaries on the same basis that other civil service and public sector pay scales are made known.

**Attendance Allowance – Payment of –
Question by Mr Henderson
for Written Answer**

Question 24. The hon. member for Douglas North (Mr Henderson) to ask the Minister for Health and Social Security:

Can you explain the reasoning behind your department's policy of not paying attendance allowance for six months after an eligible person has become ill?

Answer

It is misleading to refer to a policy of non-payment of attendance allowance for six months. Persons with an illness that is likely to limit their life expectancy to six months or less will normally receive payment (and at the higher rate) within ten days of claiming.

Otherwise the six-month period is required to demonstrate that the person is indeed suffering from something other than a short-term disability in respect of which other financial support arrangements may apply.

**Invalid Care Allowance –
Number of Recipients –
Question by Mr Henderson
for Written Answer**

Question 25. The hon. member for Douglas North (Mr Henderson) to ask the Minister for Health and Social Security:

What is the estimated number of people in receipt of invalid care allowance?

Answer

245.

**Long-Term Incapacity Benefit –
Question by Mr Houghton
for Written Answer**

Question 26. The hon. member for Douglas North (Mr Houghton) to ask the Minister for Health and Social Security:

- (1) *How is long-term incapacity benefit structured with the Manx pension supplement;*
- (2) *has the formula been amended over recent years;*
- (3) *if so, how does this impact with the inclusion of the Manx pension supplement; and*
- (4) *what was the purpose of any amendment?*

Answer

It is understood that the hon. member is enquiring as to why the rate of pension supplement attaching to long-term incapacity benefit is different to that attaching to basic retirement pension.

Up to 9th April 2001, the rate of supplement attaching to both benefits was the same because long-term incapacity benefit and basic retirement pension were payable at the same rate.

However, from 9th April 2001, basic retirement pension received an above inflation up-rating, whereas long-term incapacity benefit received only an inflation up-rating. The pension supplement from 9th April 2001 was 50% of the rate of each benefit. The differential is illustrated as follows:

(See page 151 TQ for table 1)

**Manx Pension Supplement –
Percentage Rate etc.–
Question by Mr Houghton
for Written Answer**

Question 27. The hon. member for Douglas North (Mr Houghton) to ask the Minister for Health and Social Security:

With regard to the Manx pension supplement:

- (a) *what benefits currently attract the supplement;*
- (b) *what is the current percentage of supplement paid to those benefits;*
- (c) *has the percentage rate been amended over recent years;*
- (d) *if so, by how much; and*
- (e) *is the same percentage rate of supplement being applied to all benefits?*

Answer

- (a) Basic category A or category B retirement pension (i.e. pension based on an individual's contribution record or that of their spouse); basic pension in a widowed mother's allowance, widow's pension or widowed parent's allowance; long-term incapacity benefit.
- (b) It is 50 per cent of the payable rate of basic pension or long-term incapacity benefit, as appropriate.
- (c) Yes.
- (d) From 9th April 2001 the rate of the supplement was fixed at that referred to in (b) above. Prior to that change the rate at which the supplement was payable was as follows:-

| From | Rate per week |
|------------|---------------|
| | £ |
| April 1993 | 5.00 |
| April 1994 | 5.75 |
| April 1995 | 8.05 |
| April 1996 | 8.35 |
| July 1996 | 9.35 |
| April 1997 | 13.00 |
| April 1998 | 13.90 |
| April 1999 | 15.40 |
| April 2000 | 18.70 |

(N.B. These rates assume that the qualifying benefit was payable at the full rate. In any case where the qualifying benefit

was payable at a lesser rate, the supplement was proportionately reduced.)

spending by individuals (e.g. on prescriptions, et cetera).

(e) Yes.

**Long-Term Incapacity Benefit –
Case-Load –
Question by Mr Henderson
for Written Answer**

Question 28. The hon. member for Douglas North (Mr Henderson) to ask the Minister for Health and Social Security:

In respect of beneficiaries of long-term incapacity benefit:

- (a) *what is the current case-load; and*
- (b) *what was the case-load for each of the past five years?*

Answer

- (a) The caseload as at 31st March 2002 was 1,260.
- (b) The caseload in each of the preceding four years, as at 31st March, was:

| | |
|------|-------|
| 2001 | 1,241 |
| 2000 | 1,230 |
| 1999 | 1,272 |
| 1998 | 1,293 |

**Gross Domestic Product –
Percentage Spent on Health –
Comparisons – Question by Mr Quayle
for Written Answer**

Question 29. The hon. member for Middle (Mr Quayle) to ask the Minister for Health and Social Security:

What percentage of the GDP is spent by the Manx Government on health and how does it compare with members of the European Union, USA, Canada and Switzerland?

Answer

Comparisons of this nature are always fraught with difficulties over interpretation and consistency. The figures below indicate the percentage of GDP spent by public authorities on health as determined by the OECD 2001 Health Data Report. They do not include any private sector spending (which, in the USA in particular, is considerable) or any incidental health

| EU Countries | |
|--------------|------|
| Austria | 5.8% |
| Belgium | 6.1% |
| Denmark | 6.8% |
| Finland | 5.3% |
| France | 7.1% |
| Germany | 7.8% |
| Greece | 4.7% |
| Ireland | 5.2% |
| Italy | 5.5% |
| Luxembourg | 5.5% |
| Holland | 6.0% |
| Portugal | 5.1% |
| Spain | 5.4% |
| Sweden | 6.6% |
| UK | 5.7% |

| Others | |
|-------------|------|
| USA | 5.8% |
| Canada | 6.5% |
| Switzerland | 7.6% |

Based on our own figures, the Isle of Man percentage for the same period (1998) would be 8.3%. Of this, 1.1% of GDP is spent on pharmaceutical services. The department is currently working with Economic Affairs to produce information which more closely matches the OECD Health Data.

**Gross Domestic Product –
Percentage Spent on Education –
Comparisons – Question by Mr Quayle
for Written Answer**

Question 30. The hon. member for Middle (Mr Quayle) to ask the Minister for Education:

What percentage of GDP is spent by the Manx Government on education and how does it compare with members of the European Union, USA, Canada and Switzerland?

Answer

I am pleased to provide the figures below but would caution that care needs to be exercised in their interpretation. Difficulties exist in assuring that like is being compared with like because of differences in what exactly is included in education spending in different countries.

Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP:

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Denmark | 8.3% |
| Sweden | 8.0 |
| Austria | 6.3 |
| Finland | 6.2 |
| France | 6.0 |
| Isle of Man | 5.9 |
| Canada | 5.7 |
| Portugal | 5.7 |
| Switzerland | 5.5 |
| Belgium | 5.2 |
| United States | 5.1 |
| Italy | 4.9 |
| Netherlands | 4.9 |
| United Kingdom | 4.9 |
| Germany | 4.5 |
| Spain | 4.5 |
| Ireland | 4.5 |
| Luxembourg | 4.1 ² |
| Greece | 3.5 |

Notes: Data is the most recent comparable data and relates to 1998.

¹Data is for 1999-2000 and is calculated based on gross expenditure.

Source: ¹Economic Affairs Division, Treasury

²Eurostat website

All other data: Education at a Glance 2001, OECD.

Table 1

| With effect from | Basic retirement pension | Pension supplement with basic retirement pension | Long-term incapacity benefit | Pension supplement with long-term incapacity benefit |
|------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| | £ per week | £ per week | £ per week | £ per week |
| April 2000 | 67.50 | 18.70 | 67.50 | 18.70 |
| April 2001 | 72.50 | 36.25 | 69.75 | 34.88 |
| April 2002 | 75.50 | 37.75 | 70.95 | 35.48 |

Information supplied to members as a supplement to question 12 was as follows:

Manx Airlines Performance – 1st April 2002 – 9th June 2002

| Route | Total Flights | On Time | < 15 Minutes | Sectors Cx | Delays > 90 Minutes |
|----------------|---------------|------------|--------------|------------------|---------------------|
| IOM/LPL | 377 | 53% | 61% | 9 (2.4%) | 42 (5.7%) |
| LPL/IOM | 366 | 44% | 55% | 6 (1.6%) | |
| IOM/BHD | 72 | 70% | 83% | 6 (8.33%) | 2 (1.4%) |
| BHD/IOM | 72 | 61% | 85% | 6 (8.33%) | |
| IOM/BHX | 237 | 70% | 84% | 13 (2.7%) | 2 (0.4%) |
| BHX/IOM | 238 | 72% | 87% | 13 (2.7%) | |
| IOM/DUB | 164 | 35% | 63% | 4 (2%) | 11 (3.4%) |
| DUB/IOM | 163 | 51% | 71% | 3 (1.8%) | |
| IOM/LGW | 190 | 54% | 79% | 1 (0.5%) | 11 (2.9%) |
| LGW/IOM | 190 | 44% | 70% | 1 (0.5%) | |
| IOM/MAN | 211 | 66% | 86% | 0 | 16 (3.8%) |
| MAN/IOM | 209 | 59% | 86% | 0 | |
| IOM/GLA | 90 | 53% | 81% | 1 (0.6%) | 5 (2.8%) |
| GLA/IOM | 89 | 62% | 83% | 2 (1.1%) | |
| IOM/SOU | 13 | 46% | 69% | 0 | 2 (7.69%) |
| SOU/IOM | 13 | 46% | 69% | 1 (3.8%) | |
| IOM/LBA | 71 | 54% | 81% | 4 (2.83%) | 6 (4.3%) |
| LBA/IOM | 70 | 71% | 88% | 1 (0.7%) | |
| IOM/LTN | 72 | 61% | 83% | 0 | 4 (2.8%) |
| LTN/IOM | 71 | 73% | 89% | 1 (0.7%) | |
| NETWORK | 2978 | 57% | 78% | 72 (2.4%) | 101 (3.4%) |

HIGHLIGHTS: IOM/LPL very poor at 15 sectors canx and 42 sectors over 90 minutes well below on punctuality targets at both ends of the route with a 1 in 2 chance of hitting a delay.

IOM/BHX/IOM very poor on cancellations (26 sectors) since 1st April which hides the punctuality coming in at over 70 per cent on time for services operated.

IOM/MAN/IOM no cancellations but 16 services delayed over 90 minutes.

Poor network punctuality at 57 per cent, a marked downward trend on previous years.

Poor period with high level of disruption through 5 ground damage incidents /ATC failures/MAI baggage belt failures.

IMPROVEMENTS: Decision to keep 1 J41 unit in IOM permanently to use the tried and tested method of familiarity to flight deck and engineering.

Subcharter of Titan and use of BAR/BA a/c where applicable to cover

Increase crew numbers in MAN/BHX to avoid the need to position IOM crews to operate BACX services.