

Law Officers Bill 2013
Third Reading approved

2.4. Mr Bell to move:

That the Law Officers Bill 2013 be read the third time.

The Speaker: I call the Chief Minister to move the Third Reading.

The Chief Minister: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and again, I thank Hon. Members for their indulgence in moving the Bill forward in this manner.

Mr Speaker, I do not think there is any need for me to go over the bones of this Bill again. It is a very straightforward Bill. I think Members are fully *au fait* now with what it is we are proposing to do.

It is a very urgent piece of legislation and we need to get it in so that we can rectify what is an incredibly sensitive situation that we have at the moment with the Attorney General's office. We need to get that regularised and on a normal platform again, as it has been in the past, as quickly as possible.

This Bill allows us to put a temporary Acting Attorney General in for a period up to 12 months. That period may reduce depending on other circumstances, how they develop around it, but the timeframe is urgent.

It is important that we get this Bill through today so we can move it on as quickly as possible to the Privy Council for Royal Assent. The timetable has been agreed with the Ministry of Justice and so it should move quickly from this and I think it will enable us to rectify this situation as quickly as possible. so that we can get an Attorney General back into Tynwald again as quickly as possible.

So with that, I thank all Members for their support so far.

The Speaker: Mr Teare.

Mr Teare: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I beg to move that the Third Reading of the Bill now be taken, sir. (*Interjection*)

The Speaker: To second.

Mr Teare: To second, I should say.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Douglas East, Mrs Cannell.

Mrs Cannell: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

It is just a very quick query, but an important one. I notice that on the explanatory memorandum at number 7, it states:

'No statement of the financial consequences arising from the resulting Act has been prepared.'

Can the Minister advise the House whether or not this person will be paid at the same level as if they were the Attorney General and whether or not we are in fact still paying the Attorney General, despite the fact that he is currently suspended?

The Speaker: Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: Vainstyr Loayreyder, can the mover of the Bill, the Ard-shirveishagh, inform this House the timescale which the appointment of an Acting Attorney General will take place?

The Speaker: Chief Minister to reply.

The Chief Minister: I can confirm, Mr Speaker, that the current Attorney General is still being paid. He is only suspended at this stage, depending on the outcome, obviously, of external matters. Obviously the incoming Attorney General will be paid as well and therefore there will be an extra cost to this, although I accept that has not been quantified in the paperwork.

As far as the timeframe is concerned, we are hoping to get it through to the Privy Council I think for next month, which will enable us to have this in position, I hope, by March and that is the ambition at the moment if we can stick to that; but as I say, any further delay would knock that timeframe back quite considerably.

With that, I beg to move.

The Speaker: Hon. Members, I put the motion that the Law Officers Bill be read for the third time. Those in favour, please say aye; against, no. The ayes have it.

A division was called for and electronic voting resulted as follows:

FOR	AGAINST
Mr Quirk	None
Mr Hall	
Mr Karran	
Mr Ronan	
Mr Crookall	
Mr Anderson	
Mr Bell	
Mr Singer	
Mr Quayle	
Mr Teare	
Mr Cannan	
Mr Cregeen	
Mr Houghton	
Mr Henderson	
Mrs Beecroft	
Mrs Cannel	
Mr Robertshaw	
Mr Shimmin	
Mr Corkish	
Mr Cretney	
Mr Watterson	
Mr Skelly	
Mr Gawne	
The Speaker	

The Speaker: With 24 votes for, none against, carried unanimously.
Hon. Members, that concludes the business of the House today. The House will now stand adjourned until the next sitting, which will take place at 10.30 today, in Tynwald Court.