

4.1. Freedom of Information Bill 2014 – Third Reading approved

Mr Robertshaw to move:

That the Freedom of Information Bill 2014 be read the third time.

The Speaker: Item 4, Bills for Third Reading, the Freedom of Information Bill.

I call on the mover of that Bill, the Hon. Member, Mr Robertshaw.

Mr Robertshaw: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I am pleased to be able to move the Third Reading of the Freedom of Information Bill 2014.

As previously outlined, the purpose of the Bill is to give residents of the Isle of Man a legally enforceable right of access to information held by public authorities, in accordance with the principles that information should be available to the public to promote public interest and that exceptions to the right of access are necessary to maintain a balance with the rights of privacy, effective Government and value for the taxpayer.

I would like to thank Hon. Members for their contributions during the clauses stage of the Bill, at which most of the points raised on the floor were addressed. As such, I would like to concentrate my remarks today on the small number of matters which I undertook to clarify during the previous stage of the Bill's passage.

The Hon. Member for Michael asked about the practical obligations on individual officers or Members in relation to the disclosure of written correspondence, particularly electronic correspondence, in response to an information request.

Guidance around the practicalities of responding to requests will be issued to enable public authorities to have systems in place to ensure the efficient processing thereof. There is work to do in this regard, work that the Cabinet Office is already undertaking, and the pilot phase of the Act's implementation will assist greatly in clarifying the position and refining working practices.

It is the case that electronic information held by public authorities will fall within the scope of the Act but the extent to which correspondence and other records will have to be interrogated will depend upon the nature of the request.

There are no rights to specific correspondence created by the Act although, subject to its exemptions, there is a right to information contained in such correspondence. A request for 'all information' around an issue or a policy is likely to be too broad and, therefore, activate a practical refusal reason, which Hon. Members will recall is only applicable once an authority has met its obligations to advise and assist the applicant.

The Hon. Member for Michael and the Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Quirk, sought clarification on clause 34, the qualified exemption for the formulation of policy, and particularly whether the exemption is limited to communications between Ministers rather than communications with departmental Members and others. I am happy to clarify the position as, in effect, the exemption does both.

The clause is all about protecting the 'safe space' for policy to be developed. One part of the clause would only capture communications between Ministers; however, the broader categories referred to by the Hon. Member for Michael would be captured by another part of the clause, but only if the subject matter of the request related to the formulation or development of Government policy.

So, in short, policy discussions between departmental Members and the Minister, for example, would be covered by this exemption and disclosure of the requested information would then depend upon public interest considerations.

The succeeding clause, clause 35, on the conduct of public business, covers the point raised by the Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Quirk, in relation to Statutory Boards. Under the Bill, all public

authorities can claim this qualified exemption which serves to cover information, the release of which would prejudice the effective conduct of public business, including the free and frank exchange of views for the purpose of deliberation.

During consideration of clause 41, on information intended for future publication, Mr Quirk requested clarification on the Bill's impact on the statutory and other obligations on Government to retain information. The Bill does not change the current position in which information has to be retained for variable lengths of time to meet a mix of retention periods for business, regulatory, legal and accountability purposes. There is no consolidated list setting out the length of time that public authorities have to retain information for and requirements are drawn variously from statute, internal procedures based on business need and, where appropriate, professional standards. The requirements differ from authority to authority and these should be kept under review.

To be clear, clause 63, on record tampering, creates an offence if information is altered, defaced, erased, destroyed or concealed, but this is only the case once a request for that information has been received. The clause does not create an additional general offence of record tampering outside a request for that information being submitted under the Act.

The Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Quirk, sought clarification in connection with clause 45 on whether or not information notices issued by the information commissioner will be published. Hon. Members will recall that these notices can be served on authorities in circumstances where the commissioner reasonably requires information in order to make a determination on whether an authority has complied with, or is complying with, the Act, or conforming with the code of practice.

Owing to the potentially sensitive nature of the content of information notices – being part of an ongoing investigation, for example – they would not normally be published. They are not published by the UK Commissioner and details about them in the public domain have been limited to headline information such as case reference number, date served and a primary party name rather than publishing the notice itself.

If the position in neighbouring jurisdictions is followed – and it is ultimately a matter for the information commissioner – it is likely that relatively few information notices will be issued, being instead a back-stop provision in circumstances where a public authority does not respond adequately to more informal requests for information.

I must add, however, that there is an expectation that the Commissioner will publish decision or enforcement notices which he or she issues. These are the notices which come at the end of an investigation and which are in many ways more useful for the authority, review applicant and wider public, alike.

Finally, the Hon. Member for Malew and Santon requested clarification on the provisions for the reappointment of the information commissioner contained in clause 52 and schedule 2. I can confirm that the Bill proposes that the commissioner will serve a term of up to five years after which he or she will be automatically eligible for reappointment, not *automatically* reappointed for another period of up to five years.

The commissioner is then eligible for reappointment for a third term of up to five years, if the Council of Ministers is satisfied that it is in the public interest to do so. The Council of Ministers believes that these provisions strike the right balance between the operational independence of the post enshrined in clause 53 and the benefits of term limits and a fresh perspective on the matters at hand.

In closing, Mr Speaker, there has been a considerable amount of work carried out behind the scenes to bring this important piece of legislation forward. I would like to thank the stakeholders who have contributed to this process.

I would also like to thank the Attorney General's Chambers for its invaluable input into the drafting of the Bill and Stuart Quayle in the Cabinet Office for his contribution to the development of this legislation over a significant period of time.

Mr Speaker, having outlined the purpose of the Bill and clarified the issues raised during clauses stage by Hon. Members, I beg to move that the Freedom of Information Bill 2014 be read for a third time.

The Speaker: I call on the Hon. Member, Mr Bell.

Mr Bell: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Briefly, I would like to second this major step forward, which I believe is a further step towards the Council of Ministers' commitment to a greater open and transparent Government on the Island. We have made a number of steps, I think, over the last three or four years and this is a further step in that direction.

I am aware, Mr Speaker, that there will be a number of people still unhappy that the Bill has not gone far enough, that it does not encompass every single item; but this has been a genuine effort, I think, collaborating with as wide a range of the community as possible, to ensure that we have a workable arrangement which will actually enshrine in law the right of the individual access to greater information. But balancing that against the departmental destruction which might take place, the excess of costs which potentially could land on the taxpayer and the abuse, possibly, which could be introduced in the process.

Overall, Mr Speaker, I think this is a good day for the Isle of Man. It does enhance our ability to deliver more open and transparent Government to the community and, along with the Minister, I would like to thank all those who were involved in it – Stuart Quayle, in particular – and the Minister himself for the huge amount of work that has gone in over this last year or two.

The Speaker: The Hon. Member, Mr Cregeen.

Mr Cregeen: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Minister moving this has not really given much clarity to the fixed term, because when is a fixed term not a fixed term when you are the freedom of information officer? Because it is five years – automatically renewed for five years – and then the possibility of another five years!

I can just imagine Hon. Members in this House... we are on a fixed-term contract and them saying, 'Oh, but you are automatically entitled to another five years after that and then another five years!'

I hope Members in the Legislative Council will pick up on this and actually change this, because it is not a fixed term in the way... You have got at least 10 years – so it is not a five-year contract, it is 10 years because it is automatically renewed with another five years.

I hope that they will alter this because otherwise you might as well save the money and have it as a permanent contract instead of giving an enhanced rate of pay for a fixed term.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

Mr Karran: Vainstyr Loayreyder.

May I say, firstly, it was very good to hear the input from the mover as far as the detailed response to the clauses stage was concerned. But I think we need to be honest about this Freedom of Information Bill. In reality, I believe it is nothing more than a fake Freedom of Information Bill. It is better than nothing, but it is not what a modern, functioning, European democracy would expect if we were a parliament that actually held the executive to account.

The only good thing is that we have seen... and we have seen it and it has been a long process and it has been used as a weapon over the years that I have been here – the denial of information – when you know people are not telling the truth, as far as issues are concerned. So there has been an improvement, as far as a slight change in culture, in bringing this piece of legislation in.

A culture change is needed, because I do feel that the newer Members in this Hon. House... We have seen the situation that there is desperately needed to be a cultural change.

We have seen the largest economic boom this Island has ever seen, blown, and many outside this House will find this piece of legislation of little use as far as dealing with the issues that they believe, as far as the institutional corruption of the system; because what we have at the present time is: we do not encourage ability, there is far too much nepotism where people cover up in Government the wrong doings – the incompetency of executive Government that we have had to suffer for years. The man in the street has little or no opportunity to find out what is fact and what is fiction.

I believe that it would be to the administration's benefit to get this stuff out, because lots of people find it is very difficult to believe how the things that have gone awry have gone awry for not more than just simple incompetency.

I have to be fair, Vainstyr Loayreyder, when I think back to coming into this House in 1985, and give credit to the Chief Minister's regard and his initial support for this Freedom of Information Bill; whereas his predecessor, the former Member for Castletown, Mr Brown, talked a lot about it but did very little, apart from the joke of bringing about a Bill for First Reading at the last sitting of the previous House; which was really an insult as far as that is concerned. So I have to give credit that we have got a lot further with this Chief Minister than the last Chief Minister, who was in the vanguard as far as that is concerned.

I have to say that with the mover of this Bill, the Hon. Member for East Douglas... I have supported Mr Robertshaw on many occasions whilst in this Chamber when there have been people baying for the mover's blood, (*Laughter*) which in some cases have been quite wrong. But I would like to ask Mr Robertshaw how does he justify supporting this piece of legislation... due to the fact he has now become an Hon. Member, when he was a very active member of PAG? How does he justify this to what many wanted beforehand? How does he justify the veto of an Ard-Shirveishagh on virtually everything?

This is not about personalities. I think it is important because the point is we could end up with a really evil, bad Chief Minister in the future, (*Interjections*) (**A Member:** In the future!) (*Laughter*) who could actually... this could be used as a defence mechanism against the people that we serve in this House.

This is not about personalities, this is about the fact of how does he justify that? How does he justify the ordinary residency with no real legal definition? Is it three months, six months? How does he justify the exemptions which will run riot through the entire piece of legislation?

We should be making legislation – and, alright, I was not here for the clauses stage and I did have issues that I wanted to raise... but the point is we have to remember we are not putting legislation down for us here, we are putting down legislations about the checks and balances as far as future administrations that might find themselves in a lot more of a perilous and hard position than we have been blessed with, as far as that is concerned.

I have supported the mover of this Bill on many occasions. I might find sometimes his political persuasions somewhat complex, but there are times where he was actually working for the less well-off in our society. How, in this case, does he justify the legislation with all the charges? Will this mean that we will end up with the rich having the access and the poor having nothing? What has happened to his champion for social justice that he was, if we are going to end up with charges that will affect people?

My other concern, Vainstyr Loayreyder, is for the people to have real information. I think it will be very sad that this piece of legislation will not go very much further as far as being able to expose the shenanigans of executive power in the future. It would still rely on very few of us who are prepared to ask the questions and I think that is sad, as far as this piece of legislation... because Freedom of Information is supposed to give the power to the individuals.

We have just seen, Vainstyr Loayreyder, as far as Question 5 is concerned, where it is difficult for me to find out the information of whether there has been a multi-million pound loss to the taxpayer as far as whether the consultants did the job.

When we receive a letter only the other day where we have the Minister – my friend who is very friendly with his tooth fairy – of Health and Social Care talking about a £20 million deficit on public housing, what I would like to know is how much of that deficit is actually the legitimate liability of the residents and how much is of the incompetence of the housing authorities – not himself but the housing authorities – where they are allowed to brush stuff under the carpet.

That is my fear – that there is a multi-million pound bill that could possibly be there, to take that off the liability as far as the council houses; never mind trying to get the nonsense of finding out how many local authority houses in Douglas are empty at this present time and how much is 4% or 5%, which must have an effect on the deficit as far as deficiency on those local houses, which is wrongly being labelled on the residents.

This piece of legislation is a landmark piece of legislation to help the people and to help the press – the Mickey Mouse press! – (*Laughter*) in this Island, so that they can actually get on with being able to expose these things. I understand the problem with resources, with elements of the press, but with other elements of the press, where they are state funded, there is no excuse for the lack of resources.

This is what concerns me about this piece. This should be the vanguard. The likes of us, the Chief Minister who fought for civil liberties for 30 years, like myself, can use this as a right of the taxpayer. So I do find it difficult to vote for this legislation, even though there is a slight improvement in culture change.

I have been advised, Vainstyr Loayreyder, that half a loaf is better than none. I have heard that for donkey's years, but I have to say, when you look at this piece of legislation, is it half a loaf or is it a couple of stale slices of bread, as far as this piece of legislation is concerned?

I think it is important the Minister puts down – the mover of the Bill, Vainstyr Loayreyder... because this is where the definition... If there is a complex argument in law and somebody is rich enough to do a petition of doleance in law, they will use the mover's words, as far as this is concerned. That is why I think these clarifications need to be there and that is what parliamentarians are about.

Can he clarify the definition of 'mischievous requests' so we do not have the situation where somebody who is rich enough can go to a petition of doleance whilst the less well-off will not have access because the 'mischievous' criterion is not defined?

I just think if the Minister can clarify these points... because I know the mover of this Bill is as sincere as I want, as far as Freedom Information; but the other thing I find absolutely mind blowing is the fact that the simple principle that information exists to start off with. It must be wrong if the public, who are paying the taxes for these public officials... can play the dumb blonde and not even answer that there is an issue, there is information there that can legitimise their concerns, that they cannot even be told it exists before the idea of having to go through the expense of going for a petition of doleance or whatever other way, to get that information open.

Vainstyr Loayreyder, I would like the mover also, when taking the code of practice... the access, will still exist as far as people will be able to use it for the items before October 2011. Will this be able to be used for information after October 2011 and will it stay free of charge? If he does not have that, can he make sure whoever does it in the other place in the clauses gets that sort of undertaking, as far as that is concerned?

This is not what is always described as a 'rant' as far as some of us trying to put the objective view point in this House, as far as that is concerned. This is something which we need to make sure that we do not fall folly of.

I will be waiting to hear the reply of the hon. mover to work out whether these slices of bread of this Bill are worthy for my name to be put forward to this flawed piece of legislation.

I do understand, Vainstyr Loayreyder. This legislation should have come about 10 or 15 years ago when we had the flexibility of having a growing economy, plenty of resources and bringing this about now is going to mean extra pressure on a staff that is already under tremendous pressure with the way we have had to cut back as far as redundancies and releases of early retirement. But I

actually think this piece of legislation can work as a weapon to protect our Public Service as far as making sure we get an effective, efficient Government.

What the argument, also, I am concerned about, with the Hon. Member... is you could say, 'Oh, well, it's a stumble in the right direction,' –

Mr Robertshaw: No, it is not.

Mr Karran: – but my concern is if this is an Act, will it mean that we will fall down and we will kill any future attempts at getting a real Freedom of Information piece of legislation like we would see in a modern, westernised democracy?

The next generation will be wanting answers to the Brown – particularly – administration, who started the rot, and the Bell administration as far as what they did in their name.

I just hope that the Hon. Member reflects on this input and just puts down and clarifies that, so if it does come to a ruling in law... what he meant, as far as that is concerned, because the Hon. Member might be a Minister but I do know that he has integrity from his days as being a member of PAG... of what they wanted to do. The point is I think it is important that these little items which will be major issues when we have got people saying, 'It is vexatious, it is whatever'... it is going to be important that it is down in *Hansard* today.

I hope the hon. mover reflects on this Bill and I will wait for his response to see whether we should be supporting this Bill.

The Speaker: Hon. Member, Mr Thomas.

Mr Thomas: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I am just brought to my feet by the suggestion from the Hon. Member for Malew and Santon, to put the other side of the coin, which is that I hope the Minister will reflect, in his response, that when Legislative Council and, indeed, Government consider how they deal with the term of the freedom of information officer, they had better make sure that the perception will not develop that the term is not being used, in some sense, to control the work and the investigations and the decisions of the freedom of information officer. (**Mr Quirk:** Yes.) That is obviously an issue that has been there in the past, perhaps with the Data Protection Officer and other independent bodies of Government.

The second point is just a question about the assistance, both technical and financial, that the Cabinet Office and, indeed, executive Government more generally, will be providing to Departments as they go about preparing, particularly the pilot cases to deal with the Freedom of Information responsibilities; because when the Chief Minister used to talk about the costs of bringing in this legislation he used to include, for instance, in Jersey, the huge costs of Government officers preparing information which they would need, to my mind, to go about doing their jobs better as civil servants and, as we have discussed this morning, in terms of income and expenditure and cost of living.

I hope the Central Government Cabinet Office will actually recognise the task that DEFA and the Cabinet Office are taking on when they go about preparing as pilots.

The Speaker: The Hon. Member, Mrs Beecroft.

Mrs Beecroft: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I would just like to make a couple of further points. One is, I think Government should be encouraged to put as much as possible in the way of information into the public domain, because then anybody asking a question could be pointed in the direction that they can find it for themselves, which would cut down on a lot of the cost that is going to be brought in for Government on this.

The second thing: if it is in the public domain to start with, you have experts in a lot of fields resident on the Isle of Man, who would be quite prepared to trawl through the information collated, speak to Ministers and give their input into it quite freely, without employing, at times, some expensive consultants. You could have that information and guidance given for *nothing*. People in the Isle of Man, particularly experts in their various fields, are very generous with their time and expertise if it is for the benefit of the Island.

To my mind there is a bit of contradiction going on when people are referring to the code and to this bit of legislation and the costs involved, because we are told over and over again that actually the code deals with most of the issues already. Under the code we can have just about all the information we want – it is only a tiny little bit that we cannot get under the code.

So, if we have already got that, how is it going to cost this *enormous* amount of money to have this little bit extra – that is the bit I cannot get my head round. Surely if people can get whatever the percentage is – 95% of the information already under the code – do they really think there is going to be this huge dash to get it when it is in legislation? You are only talking about a tiny percentage here, we are told, that is not available under the code.

I think the big issue that I have is the date – 11th October 2011 – actually being fixed firmly that that is when the start of this legislation, the start of this information, is going to be allowed. If it was phased, I could understand it maybe, but not to have this... It means that future parliamentarians are going to have to come back and change the legislation so that it *does* cover other times going back – the people legitimately want information that is not available under the current code.

So those are my areas of concern, particularly in addition to the ones that have already been raised. I hope the Minister will address them, and I hope that they are issues... I am sure that LegCo do go through everything that we say here and pick up on them, and I hope that they will look at them as well, Mr Speaker.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The Hon. Member, Mr Quirk.

Mr Quirk: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I give the analogy of the Minister, Mr Robertshaw, as a master baker who is making a cake, and he is doing the ingredients. My reference to the bread would be, (*Laughter*) when you have a loaf of bread it does go stale eventually and you cannot eat it. But with a nice rich Christmas cake to which you can add something, put marzipan on and icing – that is something for the future (*Interjections*) and it lasts for *years*.

Now the criticism.

I am amazed at my Member for Onchan, Mr Karran, going on to a trip: he did the trip first but I am going to do the trip second. Regarding the Council and the pros and cons of Question 5, he could address that with the Town Council itself – it is a legitimate organisation, there are mechanisms there to do that. And if the consultants and the Council are found to be wrong he should challenge that down the road. It is something to do with us, when they have finished down the road to say if there is a case to be made.

The other issue, I believe, too: he mentions corruption within Government in this particular building, and it taints us *all* a little bit. (**A Member:** Hear, hear) But I have asked several times for the Member to really come up with some evidence. Some time ago I asked him too, when he made the issue to the Minister for DED and he mentioned corruption – I am sure it was in this particular Chamber again. Did he provide you with the corruption information? I do not think he has. I know one organisation has written to you regarding that. (*Interjection by Mr Karran*) Corruption is corruption, there is no definition of it.

And if I could ask that the code itself will still be there? I have used it several times, or twice – the Speaker has used it as well; and I am not mentioning my good friend, Mr Shimmin, but I will do now

–

A Member: You just did!

Mr Watterson: You are not, but you are!

Mr Quirk: It was a draw! (*Laughter*)

The second one: it was fairly painful, but we got *some* of the answers and there was a decision made by a Deemster, which must have cost the Government an arm and a leg – or the *taxpayer* an arm and a leg.

So I would wish this particular cake... he has already made the ingredients, it is in the oven, it is baking – we have not got the icing on it or the marzipan, but that could be for the future.

But I will be watching you, because I have got the Written Answers now. He has got 271 people working in his office, so we will be looking for something for the future, Mr Robertshaw.

Mr Karran: He can join as a master baker!

The Speaker: I call on the mover to reply. Mr Robertshaw.

Mr Robertshaw: I am beginning to feel this is like a cook show or something, rather than an important matter related to a hugely important Bill, but...

I would like to thank the Chief Minister for his supportive comments and I would like to share many of the comments that he made.

Talking to the Member for Onchan's points, I would – (**Mr Quirk:** Which one?) the Member, Mr Karran, I beg your pardon. I would ask those outside this Court today, and in it effectively, not to listen too closely to the siren voice that Mr Karran portrayed this morning. Believe me, this is a game changer and if anybody thinks anything to the contrary, they will be making a serious mistake. And I want to get the message out this morning to all Departments of Government, to Statutory Boards, and to local authorities: this is important, please take cognisance of it, please get involved in it.

The only reason that we have effectively extended the period of roll-in is simply because it *is* so big and we all know we cannot afford more administration costs, so there is a learning curve for us all here. The Cabinet Office and the staff, with DEFA, will be leading the chase and we will learn how to develop our response to it, as effectively and efficiently as possible.

I was a bit concerned about Mr Karran's comment about the Chief Minister's veto. I did actually cover this in some detail during clauses stage and he did, to be fair, say he was not here. So let me just reiterate again. The Chief Minister's veto, which sits in a statutory sense in most Freedom of Information bills across the Western world that have been developed, is only used *in extremis*, in very special circumstances. It would be wholly inappropriate for the Chief Minister to otherwise... and I am convinced and sure that that could not and would not happen.

He mentioned the concept about me defining this morning the word 'mischievous': well, mischievous does not appear in the Bill so I cannot. What does appear in the Bill are the words:

'vexatious, malicious, frivolous, misconceived or lacking in substance;'

These will be defining guidance and it is not appropriate to do so in the Act.

He also suggested that, somehow, poor people would be inconvenienced or excluded by charges and, again at the clauses stage, I did indicate very clearly Hon. Members have not constructed a charge framework yet. But I did say very specifically it would not in any circumstances through the charging regime exclude anybody – and I want him to take that seriously on board.

Could I stand up as an ex-Member of PAG, hand on heart, and say, 'Yes, we have delivered'? Yes, I would; and yes, I do. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

The Freedom of Information Bill is a *very* important game changer for the Isle of Man, and that will become readily apparent as time progresses.

A number of Members mentioned the point: is the Access to Information Code going to stand up during the period of transition? The answer is, absolutely! The so-called Mickey Mouse press have used it to good effect in recent months so the access code will continue to do its good work and be well-used by our media.

The Member for Malew and Santon became a little bit animated about the issue about the contract (*Interjection by Mr Cregeen*) with the Information Commissioner. I beg your pardon... Malew? Yes, it was you?

Mr Cregeen: Animated, I thought I was quite...

Mr Cretney: Like a cartoon character!

Mr Robertshaw: I need him to just address the issue in the Bill which simply says – and I ask him to listen to this – ‘for periods of up to five years’.

Therefore it does not necessarily have to be five years. If it is the will that it is less than that, then it could be less than five years; but then you have got the corollary to that is definitely, Mr Speaker, the point made by the Member for Douglas West, that the role is independent. So there is a very careful balance there to be achieved to ensure that not only is the Freedom of Information Commissioner independent, but he is also *seen* to be independent – that is terribly important.

A number of Members mentioned the point about... certainly the Member for Douglas South, Mrs Beecroft, mentioned it, and others – maybe Mr Karran did also – the issue about the start date of 11th October: in other words the book is open effectively from the date we came into the administration.

I think it is important to make the point that if we threw everything open right the way back, the progression towards this game-changing process of freedom of access could be stymied and interrupted by a surge of issues; therefore it is very important that we do this progressively. So October 2011 is a start point and it is up to, thereafter, Council to extend that process backwards as time goes on. And it would not be anything more than a matter done by Order. So I hope that gives some reassurance there.

The final point, I think, that I should reinforce is that a Member asked about the support that the Cabinet Office would give. Yes, we are *very* cognisant of the importance of this which is why it is going to roll out progressively rather than suddenly, because Departments will need as much advice and guidance and technical support as is possible, as the impact of the Freedom of Information rolls out.

Mr Speaker, with that I think I have covered all the points raised by Hon. Members, and I beg to move.

The Speaker: Hon. Members, I put the motion that the Freedom of Information 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 proceeded.

Several Members: Ooh!

Mr Ronan: My apologies, Mr Speaker, I pressed the wrong button. (*Laughter and interjections*)

Mr Robertshaw: For the record, could you –

The Speaker: I will take a re-vote, please.

Mr Robertshaw: If you do not mind, please.

The Speaker: Please vote, Hon. Members.

Electronic voting resulted as follows:

In the Keys - Ayes 21, Noes 0

FOR

Mr Anderson
Mrs Beecroft
Mr Bell
Mrs Cannell
Mr Cregeen
Mr Cretney
Mr Crookall
Mr Gawne
Mr Hall
Mr Henderson
Mr Houghton
Mr Karran
Mr Quayle
Mr Quirk
Mr Robertshaw
Mr Ronan
Mr Shimmin
Mr Skelly
Mr Teare
The Speaker
Mr Thomas

AGAINST

None

The Speaker: There are 21 votes for, no votes against. It carries unanimously.