

4. BILLS FOR SECOND READING

4.1. Custody (Amendment) Bill 2016 – Second Reading approved

Mr Watterson to move:

That the Custody (Amendment) Bill 2016 be read a second time.

The Speaker: Item 4, Bills for Second Reading, Custody (Amendment) Bill. I call on the mover, the Hon. Member for Rushen, Mr Watterson.

Mr Watterson: Mr Speaker, this Bill came about because the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) have expressed the view for some time that their role is to monitor the welfare of detainees and hear their complaints or requests. They currently also have a disciplinary role and we agree with them that this represents a clear conflict of interest. Rather than prepare a Bill dealing only with this issue, it seemed sensible to address a number of other matters in relation to the Prison in the Bill.

These include the following: clarifying the powers of the IMB to monitor the welfare of detainees whether held in prison, Cronk Sollysh, a police station or in the cells at court; updating the powers to empower the Department to issue guidance or give direction as to how people with responsibilities under the Act perform their duties, and in turn enabling the IMB and the Parole Committee to regulate their own procedures; to regulate arrangements for the provision of healthcare through custody rules; to modernise provisions designed to ensure prison security and the safety of all within the prison environment; and extend provision for testing for drugs to include tobacco and psychoactive substances.

These are the key provisions of the Bill, and I beg to move that the Custody (Amendment) Bill 2016 be read a second time.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for West Douglas, Mr Thomas.

Mr Thomas: Thank you, Mr Speaker.
I beg leave to second, reserving my remarks.

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

Mr Karran: Would the Ard-shirveishagh just like to ... with the issue of custody, what assurances we are going to have as far as the issue of where we see more of these services being privatised, what safeguards there are going to be in order that we maintain the standards that we would expect as far as taking away our citizens' freedom on that issue.

And will that issue of the monitoring of the private sector, when we are talking about custody, be affected as far as this Bill is concerned?

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

Mr Watterson: Sir, thank you.

There are no plans to privatise, outsource or contract out any function within this Bill the way that ... Should any function be outsourced, contracted out, privatised or whatever in the future, it is important that we have still got the same monitoring arrangements in place to ensure that the quality of the service, the care in custody, does not slip.

The Speaker: Hon. Members, I put the motion that the Custody (Amendment) Bill be read for the second time. Those in favour, please say aye; against, no. The ayes have it. The ayes have it.