



Chief Minister  
19-21 Broad Street  
St Helier  
Jersey  
JE2 3RR

18 March 2022

## **Open Letter to the Chief Minister**

Dear Senator Le Fondré

As we are sure you will no doubt be aware, Islanders are currently facing an unprecedented cost of living price rise across almost every walk of life. From sharply rising fuel and energy costs to the prices of everyday necessities and food, individuals and families are being hit hard, with an increasing number struggling to cope.

The Jersey Consumer Council, which represents every Islander no matter what their financial status, is concerned that, if left unchallenged, the current rate at which prices are rising will see more Islanders cross the bread line and become dependent on either financial assistance, help from charities or both, as well as more reliance on food re-use apps and networks.

Therefore, the Council is asking you, on behalf of the Government of Jersey, to consider a raft of temporary measures to help Islanders weather the current storm until global prices, demand and supply chains begin to stabilise.

To help Islanders for a three-month period, we would like the Government of Jersey to:

### **Reduce the duty on motor fuel by 9p per litre at the till**

The 9p figure is made up of the recent 5p duty price rise and the 4p Environment levy. Almost 50% of every litre of fuel sold in Jersey is made up of duty and taxes. Due to fuel prices rising by up to 75% in some cases, the amount of duty the Government is taking from fuel has risen considerably, therefore creating a comfortable buffer to offset the proposed 9p reduction at the till.

### **Make £100 credit available for every household to spend on their chosen energy bill**

Each household, approximately 41,000, should be given the option to claim £100 credit against their chosen utility bill to help them pay for their final winter bill, if needed. This could be oil, gas or electricity. This one-off measure could again be off-set from the increased income the Government is receiving from soaring fuel costs.

### **Commit to not reducing the online shopping threshold before 1 January**

To date, the proposed reduction in the de minimis level has been scheduled for 2023, although no firm date has been set in stone. We would ask the Government to offer a guarantee that it will not impose the changes to online shopping before at least 1 January 2023.

### **Consider allowing free bus journeys to St Helier and/or three hours free parking on Saturdays**

This will encourage consumers to continue using the town centre for their shopping despite rising prices, and help maintain Islanders' access to a broad range of food and grocery outlets. This will save up to £4.80 per return fare into St Helier – the equivalent of the amount of GST spent on almost £100 of shopping, or £2.70 per car driver.

Further to the above suggestions, the Jersey Consumer Council will be asking for a commitment from local supermarket retailers to create larger donation bins for food banks, and advertise their presence more clearly around the store. We will also be asking supermarkets to, where possible, resist any further price rises on any of the JCC Price Comparison Essential 14 items. The 14 items, such as bread, milk, eggs and vegetables, are the staples in most supermarket baskets.

Action is needed now, and it is essential that any possible solutions or assistance is quickly considered and implemented. On behalf of all consumers, we urge you and your government to do whatever is practically possible to help Islanders through the next few months.

### **Consider establishing an independent anti-inflation panel**

A Government appointed panel of business leaders, industry experts and consumer-focused organisations and individuals should be formed to both monitor the rate of inflation in real terms, but also propose affordable, practical and simple counter-measures for the Government to consider adopting for the benefit of Islanders.

Yours sincerely, and on behalf of the Jersey Consumer Council,

**Carl Walker**  
**Chairman of the Jersey Consumer Council**

cc'd BBC, ITV Channel, Jersey Evening Post, Bailiwick Express and Channel 103