

Andy Jones



A ministry to rule them all...

It is said that the late great Alfred, Lord Denning, one of England's greatest jurists, had a habit of making a unique judgment one month, then citing the decision (and himself) as precedent the next. He had an incredible belief in his own omnipotence and Papal infallibility.

I watched with interest the bravura performance by what appeared to be Deputy Pope John, Lord Young, when pitching for the ministerial position at Planning and Environment, oh and Housing, Infrastructure, and Home Affairs as well.

While Lord Denning was once Master of the Rolls, Deputy Young revealed himself to be 'Master of the Broad-Brush Statement', more adept at sweeping than Trigger's broom in *Only Fools and Horses*.

He was elected to Planning and Environment with the really convincing majority of 24/23 (with one abstention). Did Members ponder that the beneficiary of an uncontested seat might just be looking to put every other ministry under his tutelage on the basis that (paraphrasing) 'it's all part of the environment, innit'.

Deputy Young appeared to spread the tentacles of Planning and Environment supremacy throughout the remaining ministries, regarding them as subservient to the diktats of his newly acquired 'Super Ministry of Everything'. I assume that, given this huge responsibility, Deputy Young will need a Chief Minister. Sorted! Senator John Le Fondré can insure Deputy Young's plans are carried out to the full.

A question on the Waterfront Development revealed that Deputy Young had already decided we don't need any new offices. This, despite an apparent consensus among those in the industry that much of our current stock is no longer fit for purpose. These premises may have been OK when Young was young, but now we have what Senator Ferguson insisted on calling (paraphrasing) 'oh, you know, electronics'. Sadly it appears that Deputy Young has not kept up to date with the digital revolution and its demand for modern office infrastructure.

An apparent lack of detailed knowledge also hasn't prevented Deputy Young from making sweeping statements in relation to the Jersey Development Company and quangos either. Let's hope he has no preconceived ideas about the new Hospital, otherwise a biblical scale conflict is looming with the new Health Minister.

On a final note, Deputy Young's soon-to-be general factotum Senator Le Fondré has moved from being a Scrutiny Wonk to CM (also known as 'Gamekeeper turned Poacher'). So, with the redundant experience in the Assembly now left to fill

The real cost of ch

Our population is growing, but the percentage of working-age people is shrinking. This puts a lot of pressure on our government's economic cake

ACCORDING to the 2011 census, there were 26,605 'economically inactive' people in Jersey. Of those, 4,537 were 'looking after the home'. Perhaps unsurprisingly, 96% of the people in this category were women.

Needless to say, there are many highly positive reasons why people choose to stop working to look after their families. However, a significant chunk of these people actually want to work – the cost of childcare just makes it financially irrational. Someone earning £30,000 per annum would end up with zero financial benefit at the end of month (after the costs of full-time childcare – around £1,500 per child – and parking in town). Someone earning £50,000 would 'break even' after the cost of two children under age three to four.

In her book *'Lean In'*, Sheryl Sandberg, the chief operating officer of Facebook, argues that women should accept this 'break even' period for up to four years because it's a relatively short period (assuming an average career of 40+ years). Once it's over, Sandberg says, the woman will go on to be promoted and receive increased remuneration over the years (as well as other benefits such as a pension). Therefore, the sacrifice is 'worth it'. I think that's a lot to ask. Juggling young children and full-time work is hugely challenging. Going through all that hard work, stress and feelings of guilt would be hard to bear if the net financial benefit at the end of the month was zero.

Childcare is expensive, yet exceptionally good value for the service it provides. For £5-£7 per hour, someone



Victoria Eastwood

is taking on the massive responsibility of caring for a child – feeding them, protecting them from danger, working from a structured development curriculum, teaching them social skills, taking them on outings, monitoring their health and wellbeing – the list is endless. It is surely one of the hardest jobs in the world. It can't be any cheaper, so in order to shift the trends there needs to be an external intervention.

The 'free 20 hours' Jersey offers children the year before they start

MANY thousands of Jersey people and visitors alike will remember the fishermen's pub, La Folie Inn. During its heyday it was under the stewardship of the late Bert Langford and later Chris Melville and his wife.

It was hugely popular and was somewhere one had to visit for a cool drink in the summer and to meet 'real local characters'. Gosh I could name a few but sadly they are all now gone.

Now, if I remember correctly, it was in around the early 2000s that the then Housing Department were asked to relocate the long-time tenants from the two cottages attached to this quaint, beautiful old public house. I'm not sure when this fishermen's inn was built – must be 16th or 17th century – and it was and still is one of Jersey's national

Terry's Week

With Terry Le Main



have Visit Jersey chief executive Keith Beecham, Economic Development, States Members and even Charles Allout of the National Trust for Jersey silent on the matter. Why aren't they shouting from the roof tops that this important historical pub is desperately needed to boost our tourism infrastructure? It will soon be 20 years since it was abandoned, even though there were willing tenants