



Huge rise in Manx visa applications since Brexit

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The number of visa applications on the Isle of Man has increased five-fold since Brexit, the Treasury Minister has said.

In 2017/2018 there were 856 visa applications, which had increased to 4,451 by 2023/ 2024, with 764 applications currently being considered and pending a decision.

Treasury Minister, Alex Allinson told the House of Keys that the increase was “partly because, since the Brexit agreement, far more people needed to have a visa” to come or stay on the island.

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The upward trend should be considered “permanent”, he added.
‘More resilient’

In the same period the number of passport applications rose from 8,600 to 12,197, which Dr Allinson said was due to more people needing to have proof of identity to travel in the common travel area and further afield.

Officers were also having to undertake enhanced common travel area compliance at the borders and unexpected law enforcement cases.

He said that an increase in workload and pressure had led to some “very good members of staff” leaving, and the department was in the process of replacing them.

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This meant the team had not always been available to answer queries or emails about applications.

There are plans to double the number of immigration officers from three to six, Dr Allinson said.

Joney Faragher MHK raised concerns about the team being able to deal with “more onerous” citizenship applications, Dr Allinson said the department was hoping to make the process of naturalisation more welcoming.

“I would like to provide assurance that we are doing everything we can to rectify the situation and establish a more resilient service in the future,” he added.

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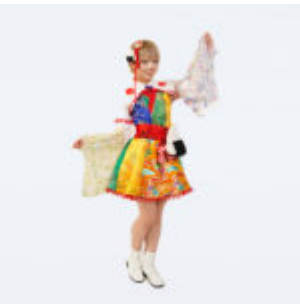
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