

STATES OF JERSEY

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Early Years Review

Friday, 9th November 2007

Panel:

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian of St. Lawrence (Chairman)

Deputy J.Gallichan of St. Mary

Deputy S. Pitman of St. Helier

Dr. C. Hamer (Advisor to Panel)

Witnesses:

Senator M.E. Vibert (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture)

Mr. M. Lundy (The Director of Education, Sport and Culture)

Deputy D. W. Mezbourian of St. Lawrence (Chairman):

We will just go through the formalities. I would like to welcome you both to the hearing. You are aware that it is being recorded and you know about privilege, you know our terms of reference, and I do not even know if we need to introduce ourselves.

Senator M.E. Vibert (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):

Nice to be back.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Yes. You may not think so by the end.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I would think so.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What we intend to happen today is that we get some firm answers from you, which must be what you are expecting. We have prepared our questions accordingly. Our intention in fact is to work through those in order to get the responses? Okay?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We endeavour to respond to anything we can. Obviously if there are some things we have to look up

because we have not had notice of the questions, we will have to look it up.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Yes. I was just about to say there may be some that you will need to come back to us on. We will make a start. The first section that we are looking at is funding the strategy. This first question may be one that you do not necessarily have to hand, which is: what is the department's overall expenditure on children of 0 to 5?

Mr. M. Lundy (The Director of Education, Sport and Culture):

Overall expenditure not including primary school, because obviously there is an overlap for the 5 year-olds; the overall expenditure would really be that investment which is in nursery education at the moment, which would be about £1.7 million. I will check accurately on that, but that would be in the region. Given that the strategy links are about another £1.5 million to deliver to the other 50 per cent it is reasonable to assume that the figures are fairly certain.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Because we do have some costs with our registration and so on, that we were talking about, but again that is spread over a wider group, so it is quite hard to apportion that area.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

The figure you have just quoted, does that include the funding you give to J.C.C.T. (Jersey Child Care Trust)?

Mr. M. Lundy:

No, it would not include that. The funding to J.C.C.T., off the top of my head, I think it is about £160,000. I would need to check that.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

£160,000, we will check that. Because the J.C.C.T. again is a wider age range than just the under 5s, because they have a mandate that includes over 5s, so it is hard to apportion out exactly what is going where.

Mr. M. Lundy:

We would need to check on the breakdown figures for you in terms of day care registration.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We can give you the figures on the early years, 0 to 5, funds in more detail.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What about the current costs of providing this free education in primary schools?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

That was included in the bundle I gave you.

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is the £1.7 million.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Okay, so that is revenue. How about capital?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Here we are. The revenue cost, it was on number 6, which is *Report for the Council of Ministers*, 1st March 2007, under model one I think it gives some idea of the revenue costs of nursery classes et cetera.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The only additional capital investment in nursery education that has not been taken already is that which is going into St. Peter's School. That would not have been separated out because that is a major capital redevelopment of the whole school. So there are no monies set aside for capital development for nursery education purposes now.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I understand, okay, then. Our understanding, Minister, of the proposal that you have on the table is that it relies on the creation of a partnership with the private sector, who would receive funding for 3 and 4 year-olds.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Correct.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Will you explain who the members of that partnership would be?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The members of the partnership would be on the one side ourselves, obviously, and any registered childcare provider who met the standards we set for the programme. In it we say we would only do it if certain standards were met.

Mr. M. Lundy:

In terms of the broader partnership, obviously the strategic partnership, we would wish to involve parents et cetera. But in terms of the delivery side of it the partnership would be between private sector providers who met the standards, who wished to take part in the scheme and who were prepared to deliver against a fair value contract.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

How would it operate?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It would be likely to operate on the basis of a Nursery Education Fund. Providers that met the standards and wanted to be part of the partnership the hours for individual children would be purchased. We have a very successful track record in this in terms of our relationship with private schools, because we already have, in a sense, a system that does not exist in the U.K. (United Kingdom) in the way that we are funding, for example, schools like Beaulieu, like De La Salle, where we provide funding on the basis of pupil numbers. So we would be able to lift that mechanism and apply it to the Nursery Education Fund and fund private providers in the same way.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

How would you go about working with these private providers to ensure this delivery?

Mr. M. Lundy:

This might seem sketchy but it is not, in the sense that there is a sort of a vision for how this would work. There is a real recognition that at the outset, if it would work in a fruitful way, private providers themselves would have to be engaged at the very beginning. So it is not a question of just taking finished product to them, but it would be about defining the standards; it would be about looking at how we could support private providers in working with the public sector in order to, not just meet the standards but to strive for higher standards. So, what type of support we would put in there, what type of advisory support, what type of evaluation inspection arrangements would we put in place, how often would these facilities be inspected, et cetera. In order to be able to give us some sort of assurance that we have proper systems in place to monitor the quality and the experience. We have slightly different arrangements obviously in the schools, because they are subject to their own evaluation arrangements and we would not simply wish to transfer those evaluation arrangements to the private sector. Our evaluation arrangements in the schools have a heavy emphasis on self-evaluation with external validation. We would see that that is a potential model that we could develop with the private sector.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

One of the ground rules was that we wanted to avoid the private rent rebate scenario, so that what we

were putting in did not become a subsidy and fees just went up. I did not want officers to spend hours and hours and days and days working out with the providers the detail of this, until we knew there was some funding forthcoming. Otherwise, one it would erase the expectations of the providers and it would also mean putting officers' time to it, if there was no material result in the end. So we know what we want to do, we believe and we have spoken with J.E.YA. (Jersey Early Years Association) that we can work out a funding mechanism, when we have experience in these in these areas. But I took the view that there is no point in working out the detail of this funding mechanism until we know whether we are going to have any funding to provide.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

How long do you think it will take you to work this mechanism out?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Not particularly long. I think certainly less than a year. It is not that we have done nothing about this. We have taken advice about this before we have pursued the development of the strategy. We have worked with representatives from Lambeth and looked at the contractual arrangements that they have set up with private providers, how they worked the Nursery Education Fund, some of the pitfalls that you are likely to face when you develop these types of arrangements - and there are many pitfalls, there is no question about it. Some local authorities in the U.K. seem to be much better at managing them than others. So we are aware of them; what we have not done obviously is to translate those arrangements into any hard contractual arrangements for Jersey as yet, because we want to engage the private sectors it hat work.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I will point out that of course the proposal was for the scheme to start the following September, to give us nearly a year preparation time from when, if the States had agreed, it would have been passed.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

You are confident that you would have had everything set up and in place to start in September 2008, had the amendment been successful?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Yes. We have some considerable advantages because we are already registering every private nursery, so we already have knowledge of every single private nursery. We have a fair indication of nurseries that would wish to be involved in the scheme. We would approach this in a fairly supportive way, so it would not be a question of narrowing it down so: "Here is the cut off point. You meet the standard. You do not meet the standard." We put in arrangements to help people meet the standard before the standard before the date. There might be some issues around that, but certainly we were confident that

we could develop, extend, our current day care registration team, broaden the evaluation procedures that they already use for registration, engage our education advisors - one is already working with the private sector - and bring all those resources together to provide a pretty formidable model for monitoring and evaluating the quality and ensuring that the private sector would be delivering value for money.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What funding formula would you use? Private/public, how would you ...?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Bearing in mind that the plans were built around the full funding model for per hour per child, and that would be the likely model that we would be looking to analyse exactly what private nurseries were delivering. We would establish the full cost per hour per child. The rationale for that is that we did not wish to create a situation where there might be a subsidy and then the provider was charging top-up fees on top of that subsidy, and in actual fact the investment that the States was making would be absorbed over a period of time and there would be no control over the cost of childcare. So this was a mechanism, not just for ensuring that private providers were providing value for money, but also to try and manage, in a sense, the cost of childcare on the Island, which is an issue for parents, and also to create a partnership that would drive up standards.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Okay, so you have started to speak about costs. On what basis has the proposal been costed?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The proposal has been costed initially on an analysis of the cost per child in a nursery class, and then the anticipated cost per child based on some of the overheads that private nurseries would have. At the earliest point we discussed this with the private sector and, in fact, have already had agreement with the private sector about what that cost might be. So when we were putting together the original strategy we were looking at a cost of £4 per hour.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What profit margin did you allow in the cost?

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is a difficult one at this time because the profit margins differ right across the private sector. There is not the sort of continuity or the consistency that would enable you to make that decision. I do not have the costings with me, I could not tell you off the top of my head.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We have some of the costings. One of the things we did is we looked at what private sector providers are charging, which are varying charges. We also looked, and we know exactly how much it costs us for 3 to 4 year-olds. From that we came to the figure of £4, which seemed a reasonable figure. It was within the bounds of what the private sector are charging. It was not a million miles away from what it costs ourselves, if you add in some capital cost, because of course our revenue costs did not take any account in our provision of the capital cost, where you would have to take into account with the private providers, whether it is own premises, which could be on a mortgage, or leased premises.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So would the funding formula be the same for the public nursery and the private providers?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The funding formula would obviously be different, because the money that comes in to the nurseries come in on a slightly different basis. Obviously the nursery ...

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Which nursery are we speaking about?

Mr. M. Lundy:

We are talking about school nurseries. Within school nurseries the premises of course are absorbed in the overall cost of the school. There are economies of scale there. The other difference, of course, is like you have qualified teachers who will be teaching kids within a classroom; you have a higher cost there. It is a slightly different situation. I think when we looked at the charges across Jersey we were looking at a range somewhere between £3-something per hour to, at the top, around about £6 to £7 per hour. What we wanted to do was to make sure that this was just not an exercise where we were cutting it to the bare minimum, because we would have expectations of private sectors that the might not be delivering at the moment, which would be around engaging of the sector in professional development, there would be additional costs to that. As I say, I do not have the figures with me, but we were very secure at the time that the figures that we were talking about allowed the private sector to make a reasonable profit and for us to have a reasonable expectation about how much they would invest in the professional development of the staff in their environments.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What was their response to £4 an hour?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Eventually they felt that it was a reasonably fair cost. Bear in mind that the agreement at that point in time was solely in respect of being able to take this strategy forward with some degree of support from

the private sector.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

When you say “that point in time” what was that point in time?

Mr. M. Lundy:

That point in time was just before the updated progress paper from the working party was taken to the States, which would have been around about December 2006.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It was March 2007, I think.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Progress report, December 2006.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Then another one 1st March 2007.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The agreement with the private sector was towards the end of 2006.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

When you say the private sector “they” took it on board eventually, who are they?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is interesting you should raise that, because that was the question for us. At that point in time there was some difficulty in the sense that we seemed to be talking to a number of independent providers. When we talked to the Jersey Early Years Association we did not always get the same response. So we met the Jersey Early Years Association and we basically asked them if they would be able to create a situation where they felt they could speak with one voice for the private sector. It is not for me to say whether or not they have achieved that, but most of our dealings now are done through the Jersey Early Years Association, and they have an executive group that represents all private providers on the Island.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What would you say if they are not representative? What about the people who have not been involved?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

For example, all our consultation has been open to anybody, and they could have put forward, and some

did, their views. For some of the negotiation, the detail, we felt that Jersey Early Years Association gave a good cross-section of nurseries, particularly by the people who came along to the meeting, because we know who run which nurseries and so on. I hope when we will be able to go ahead with this funding of course we will negotiate and talk with every provider who wishes to take part.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Is that not something you think you should be doing now, in advance of finding the funding?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think there is a danger of building up an expectation that the Minister may not be able to deliver.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I think I would like to ask the Minister whether he believes he has already done that by bringing the amendment forward and announcing the policy publicly.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

No. I believe that what I have done in bringing it forward and announcing the policy publicly is what I am trying to achieve and trying to get the States to agree to. I think the danger in getting into even more advanced negotiations, as I mentioned before, is building up expectations and using up the time of those private providers to do this, when there is no certainty the funding is going to be forthcoming - and also using officer time. I do not think it is a good use of what we have in the Island, our scarce resources. I have scarce resources in officer time which I have to spread about all the initiatives that I want to do. Private providers' primary role is providing nursery provision. I do not want to take up their time on issues that are not going to reach fruition. If that amendment of mine had been passed we would have had roughly a year to work with all the providers to come up with a satisfactory funding scheme. We believe we have got the bones of that scheme, very much so. Through our talks with J.E.Y.A. who represent a good number of the places that would be available, we believe that we would have taken that forward. We would of course, as I say, negotiate and talk with all providers who wish to take part in the scheme.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Just now a very easy yes or no answer for you: have you built up the expectations of the public by announcing this policy before you had the funding?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I do not know how you can do it in any other way.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So is the answer yes or no?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The answer is you are bound to build up some expectation, on the other hand you suddenly announce that you have the funding you cannot do. We do things in public, it is called democracy. I take something to the States and the States decide. I cannot say: "The States are going to do this." If I do not announce a policy and take it to the States, and to take it to the States I have to announce it publicly, I do not see how I could operate in any other way. Perhaps I could ask: how could one do it in another way?

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I have never been a minister so I cannot answer that question at all.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

In our system we have to go to the States to get approval.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Obviously the questions we are asking are questions that have been submitted to us and we need to attempt to find the answers.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes, certainly. I cannot think of a system under, our system of government, where I have to get State's approval for a new initiative like this, how I could not announce it publicly without finding the funding or whatever.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

That is a fair comment.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It is the States who decide and under my view, and as you heard me give an answer to questions early this week, unfortunately I feel the States made the wrong decision, but of course the States can never be wrong.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So your next step then, you told us in the House on Tuesday that you were looking at other means of finding the funding, what are they?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We had a further meeting with J.E.Y.A., representing this. It was a very open meeting, where they put

forward a number of ideas and different ways of doing it. What we have agreed to do, and what we are very close to completing is to look at costs for a slightly altered scheme, which would be to offer 15 hours per week free to all 3 to 4 year-olds, with offsetting some of the costs by charging in our own schools for any hours over those 15.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Whose suggestion was 15? Did it come from J.E.Y.A. or did it come from you?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I think it came from me. I am trying to remember the meeting, but it was something I discussed with Mario before the meeting.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

When was that meeting?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I have not got my diary with me.

Mr. M. Lundy:

It was about 2 weeks ago, or 3 weeks.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Three weeks ago, I think. I can look up the date - it is obviously in my diary.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Can I ask you to confirm the date to us, please?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I can confirm the date of that meeting. Yes, after the States not approving the amendment, obviously we had been thinking since then how we move this forward. I have had discussions with the Chief Minister and reiterated my commitment to this. I listened to what States Members said. Obviously I kept a note of it all. I have been trying to think of a way in which perhaps we can move forward and perhaps similar to the U.K. in one respect of starting off at a point and then having an aspiration to move forward from there. The U.K. currently offer 12½ hours free, as I understand it, with 15 hours free coming in ... I am not sure.

Dr. C. Hamer (Advisor):

Certainly there is an aspiration and an intention in legislation now for the U.K. to move forward in terms

of increasing the hours.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I was thinking of what was said about equity and so on, and I thought the 15 hours is half, so it is mornings and afternoons, and so on, of the school day. But it is not a straightforward calculation. You do not know how many hours will be bought in your own nursery schools and so on. We did a survey on it, which you have in your final bundle, *Survey of Parent with Children in Nursery Classes*. So, this was something that I had been thinking of and it is something that developed in our discussion, and we had already discussed it in our discussion with J.E.Y.A., about working up the costings on, if I can call it, the 15/15 proposal. That is where we are and we hope to have those costings worked out, because they are quite complex.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What are the consequences of now changing it to 15 hours, for the private providers?

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is a piece of work that is going on at the moment, so we would have to remodel the consequences of that and the type of things that we are looking at. If you look at appendix one of the last paper, in fact it is the last page of this particular bundle that you have. What we tried to do the last time was to get some indication of how the parents of children who are already in nursery classes might respond. If you bear in mind the fact that most of the discussion around early years, in recent years, the parents that have engaged have been those who have private sector places. There has not been an incredible amount of engagement from those parents who already have free places. So it has not been easy to gauge how those parents might respond to the introduction of charges. If you look at that particular survey there were a number of issues that came out for us at the time, obviously we were concerned about income support, the impact of having to be in the Island for 5 years before you could claim income support, and the impact that that would have if it would be brought into nursery charges. At that time about 7 per cent of the parents who had free nursery classes would not have been eligible for any financial support. So we would have to think about what would be the impact on classes there. In terms of household income about 33 per cent of the parents were already on income of less than £26,000, so we were concerned there again about the impact on income support. Probably one of the most interesting things was the question: "If charges had been introduced on nursery classes would you have chosen a fulltime or part-time place?" About 45 per cent suggest they would go to a part-time place. So it is not easy to assume, it is not right to assume that your nursery classes are full, and if you introduce charges for 15 hours that all those people are going to turn up and pay them. You might find, as we did when we introduced part-time places - and of course the Audit Commission recommended that we moved away from part-time places to fulltime places - most parents wanted a morning place and then we had vacancies through the afternoons. So there is a modelling exercise to be done around the impact of 15 hours free, 15 hours

charged, and that exercise is ongoing at the moment.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I am just looking back to the transcript of the hearing that we held earlier with you. When asked whether you had considered 15 hours we were told: “If we were in the same position that the U.K. are in, in terms of not having the capacity, being forced to compromise to that extent, then it is certainly something that would have formed part of the strategy, but there was perceived to be real opportunity here with full capacity and with 50 per cent of children already accessing a free place that that was an opportunity obviously.” So you have changed your mind since the hearing that you attended.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Reacting to circumstance and looking at alternatives, because my driving force still is to introduce equity into the system and to give all 3 to 4 year-olds in Jersey an opportunity of some early years’ education. If by offering 15 hours for all the States will support or gets support for funding in some way, because it will still require funding, then it is not my ideal. I would have an aspiration to move up from that to offer more hours. It would certainly be better than the current situation, which is so inequitable.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So, nevertheless, since 15th October you have now changed your approach.

Mr. M. Lundy:

If you look at the early papers in here you will see that 15 hours was considered at that point in time.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Yes, we understand that.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I guess for the Minister to go to the States and say: “Well, we want either 20 hours, or 15 hours or 10 hours, we are not quite sure” would not necessarily have been appropriate. The ideal 20 hours was based entirely on the research. The E.P.P.I. (Evidence Informed Policy and Practice) project was saying that the value of early education could be accrued within 20 hours. That situation obviously appears to have changed in terms of being achievable. So, at this point in time that is the reason why we are considering our options.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So how would 15 hours operate?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

In what way?

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

How do you envisage it being applied to a child? Would they be able to go for so many hours a day? How flexible would you see it being, because you must have discussed this with the private providers?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I would just like to take you back a step to really what the fundamental challenge was here. I mean, much of the discussion is about inequity. Inequity is a symptom of the problem. The problem has been how to ensure that all our 3 and 4 year-olds have access to a high quality early education affordable, preferably free, as far as the Minister is concerned, educational experience. Now, if you still use that as the basis then you have to have some view about how sessions are organised. You do not want a discontinuous experience. Bearing in mind that we have qualified teachers in our nursery schools who are delivering what we would see as quite sophisticated programmes for young children, we do not want a situation where they are simply being child minders; children are coming in and going out and the continuity of educational programmes are destroyed. So the likelihood is that we would be looking to do block sessions. We would be hoping that parents would still subscribe to the 30 hours a week, but would be prepared to pay for 15 so that the continuity of educational experience could be maintained.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

That continuity is important and we would be looking to maintain that continuity.

Mr. M. Lundy:

This was not primarily about childcare. This was primarily about nursery education. There has been some criticism that perhaps in driving forward this strategy that not enough was made of the economic benefits of early education and childcare. But with the highest rate of working women in Europe the view was that the economic benefits had already, to a large extent come through. Maybe there is more there. But the point was you now have that and how do you ensure that 3 and 4 year-olds have a high quality educational programme? So, whatever steps were taken it would probably be by session, yes, it would obviously have to be. It would likely be a block session to give parents some surety of a morning place - and this is obviously subject to further discussion. But we would hope that children would still be in nursery classes for at least 20 hours a week.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Thank you.

Dr C Hamer:

Sorry, was that 20 or 30?

Mr. M. Lundy:

We would prefer 30 but given that the educational benefits are perceived to accrue within 20 we would hope it would be at least 20.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I would like to go back to the funding. If you were to receive the funding, how would you allocate it? Would it be to the private providers? Would it be to the parents? How would you distribute it?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It would be to the providers.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Have you discussed that with them?

Mr. M. Lundy:

We have discussed that with them. We have not gone into detail with them, but it would be to the providers, because it gives an opportunity for the States of Jersey to influence the affordability of childcare and the quality of childcare.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Thank you.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We are not social security - this is not a benefit for parents or for the family. This is about providing high quality childcare.

Mr. M. Lundy:

We appreciate there is another view to that. There is another view that by providing the funding to the parents, that the parents themselves will drive up quality because they will make the choices that obviously will have its impact. Given the size of the Island, that was not necessarily seen to be in the best interests of a partnership.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

At the last hearing, which I just referred to, on 15th October, the Minister asked us to look at means testing as an option. What have you done in that regard?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We have done some work, as you have seen previously, on that. We are working at the 15/15 option at the moment with the charging. That will involve ... **[Interruption]** You were asking about means testing. Particularly if we went to the 15, there is a sort of almost built-in means testing because, as Mario was saying, quite a large proportion of the families were below £26,000 and would be likely to qualify for income support, which has an element for childcare. There are also others who will benefit from the tax allowances and so on. So there is that, but because we already offer free nursery education, and the State's policy is such, we have not gone further than we did before to a great extent on looking about means testing everybody, if I can put it like that. It is an option I would be prepared to look at but certainly it is not an option I favour, because I do not believe that we should be moving backwards and away from what is a best accepted practice in western Europe, which is offering free nursery education and early years education, as much as possible, to having it all means tested, because in one of the papers it shows all the downsides and so on, and partly about going for the cheapest option and unregistered childcare et cetera. But it was brought up in the States, which is why I mentioned to the Scrutiny Panel they may wish to examine it. It is not an option I favour.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The main issues around means testing are the unforeseen impact on take up, especially with hard to reach families, the cost of administration, and the impact on current benefit arrangements. If you look again at the data that was collected from the survey of parents with children in nursery classes I think you have to treat the results of this survey with some caution, but it gives you an indication. If you have got 33 per cent at the moment we have a free place, then you have 33 per cent who potentially could claim income support, so you are taking in the money to give it out again. The rest are not gaining childcare tax relief, so you take in money and then you give it back on childcare tax relief. It is difficult to work out the balance between the 2, but means testing will not necessarily bring you in what you expect it might bring in. In fact, it might create some additional barriers for, as I said, those families, the very ones that we would want using the initiative.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes. I would refer the panel to our report for the Council of Ministers dated 26th July 2006, which is item 3 in our bundle, and on page 9 we outline the advantages and disadvantages of means testing under option E.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Sorry, you are saying item 3, but they are not given numbers.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It is marked 3 in the bundle. You do not have those markings that I put in myself.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

26th July.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

26th July and of that one it is page 9, option E, where it lists the advantages and the disadvantages. Particularly if we are concerned about the educational side it could affect the continuity of the educational experience. Again, I mention the possible increased use of unregistered childcare. Of course some parents may not be prepared to be means tested et cetera.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Of course, likewise there are some benefits of fee provisions, because those people who currently would claim childcare tax relief would not be eligible for it and those people who currently get the childcare allowance, or soon income support, would not be eligible for it.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So 15 hours is now an option that you are considering.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Correct.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What else?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

That is the option we are working on at the moment, because it is the option we have come forward with in conjunction with the Jersey Early Years Association. I want to look at the figures, in particular, from that option, before considering any other options. I am also waiting eagerly for this Scrutiny Panel's report, which will obviously give me food for thought and I will take into very serious consideration.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So if 15 hours was decided upon, how would it affect the planning for St. Peter's nursery?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It would not. In the sense that the planning for St. Peter's nursery, as I am sure you are all aware, that planning a new school is not done in 6 months, it is not done in one year, in fact I think it is about 5 or 6 years, 7 years, we have been planning St. Peter's school now. It involves the overall planning, getting the capital funding identified, then getting the capital funding approved by the States, having a P.70

group, doing all the plans, getting the plans approved, which they now have been and working all that out. So St. Peter's School is so far down ... in fact they are about to start building it in the near future. I could check, but I would think it would cost more now to not include a nursery class as to include one. We would check, but the work has been done and it is as part of the school. It is an integral part of the school; we would have to have redesigns and everything else. Also it is current States policy, which I have been working under, which I inherited, which is every time you redevelop a primary school you try to redesign and build in a nursery class, if it has not already got one, or reinstate it if it has, with the development. That is then recognised and funded by the Treasury Minister on the basis of that States policy, which has been extant for nearly 20 years now.

Mr. M. Lundy:

There are a number of options. Obviously if you go back to the real challenge, which is about bringing high quality nursery education to every child of 3 and 4 years of age, and then you look at the issues around the current system, which are about access, affordability and equity. Then the options that remain available are to continue playing around with the hours - if you cannot do 15 do 10 - and then that becomes an exercise that, I guess, at some stage is less meaningful in terms of what the children benefit from. Another option would be to introduce more flexibility, and we discussed this at the last Scrutiny Panel, where you have children in for 2 days a week, others in, so that you make more of your nursery provision. I think we have discussed the impact that that might have on the continuity of the educational experience, but also that those solutions have been introduced in the U.K. predominantly to help the government deliver an agenda without the capacity to deliver it. The places, as we said the last time, are already available in the Island if the private sector joins the partnership to provide for every child. The other option would be to simply introduce charges for nursery classes. That may have an impact on access. It certainly would have no impact whatsoever on the affordability of early education and childcare, it would just make it more expensive for everybody, but it would deal with the inequity of the situation.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So if 15 hours were given to all 3 and 4 year-olds, how would it impact upon the private providers if parents said: "Right, we get 15 hours we are not going to pay for any more."?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Well, that is not the reality, is it? Because the reality is that most parents, and those parents who use private sector primarily, need more because of the working pattern of their lives.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So you cannot see there being any impact on this at all?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The likely impact on this is around the nursery class provision because if you bear in mind the philosophy that underpins the provision of nursery education is not solely to support working families. There are many families out there who value a nursery education and we do not want to create a situation either with means testing or introduction of charges, where a parent who chooses not to work where their child is disadvantaged because they cannot access a nursery class provision. So the likely impact of this is around public sector provision. Without making some considerable assumptions, it would be difficult to be more accurate about what that impact would be likely to be. The worry would be that people who could not afford the charges simply would not give their children the opportunity.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Is it right when you say that all 3 and 4 year-olds would have free access, or free funding for their care and education, if the parents have to pay extra on top of the £4 that you are considering offering?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

When we have been negotiating with the providers that is why part of the negotiation would be that they would provide 15 hours at a set cost.

Mr. M. Lundy:

A full value contract would ensure that providers were unable to charge top-up fees.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

How far advanced are you with that?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I think we got general acceptance from J.E.Y.A. who understood this point, because as I said before, the last thing we want to get into is a private rent rebate scenario, where landlords put up rents on top of what the rebate is and we are not going to go there. So the full value contract would mean those private providers who join with us would agree that that was the maximum they could charge. There would be a set fee for those 15 hours free.

Dr. C. Hamer:

That is my question: I just wanted to clarify that it is up to them they charge. If parents want to go there for 30 hours they have 15 hours at the £4, or whatever it comes to be, and then negotiate, as they do normally.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I shall not go into the detail of this, but there are some issues around that that would need to be worked

through. Clearly there is a wealth of experience in the U.K. where they have already faced this and worked through many of the issues. What we would not want to do is to create a situation where parents are getting 15 hours free and then paying £10 an hour for another 10 hours. So there has to be some constraints around that, and that would be built into the fair value contract.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

We have got quite a few questions to work through but we appreciate that you are going into depth in your responses. What we would like to know is your definition of 3 and 4 year-old provision. For example, are you talking about the third birthday or the year before starting statutory education?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It is written down somewhere, it is quite clear.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Yes, it is, it is always the simple one.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It is. I have got it down here somewhere.

Mr. M. Lundy:

If I recall, because it has been based on a nursery education it is the academic year in which the child is 3.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

After that.

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is right, the child is 3. I will need to clarify that.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Are you able to do that now by looking through your papers?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I do not know - it depends how quickly you want it.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

It is not in what you have submitted to us, is it?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I thought it was. I could be wrong. I thought it was.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I will clarify this for you immediately after the session. Would that be satisfactory?

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Yes, okay that is fine. Thank you, Mr Lundy.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I will keep looking while I talk.

Mr. M. Lundy:

You have the nursery education policy. It is in the nursery education policy. I do not have that one with me.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

That is where it is, which we provided for you, I am sure. I am sure it is in the policy document.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

There is a new one I understand.

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is just a slightly revised version of that. The policy that we have should contain that information.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Okay, but I believe at the last hearing we asked for a copy of the new policy.

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is right, and I would assume that you have had that through by now. If you have not I will chase it up.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Okay, thank you.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

But there is no material change.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The main change in that was the centralisation of admissions to nursery classes, whereas previously the admissions were left to the head teacher for the individual schools.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

During the last hearing, Minister, you told us that, and I quote: "I looked at our own budget and it is not possible to find the funding available with our own budget with efficiency savings we have been making over the past number of years."

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Correct.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Sorry did you hear that?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes, correct, I said.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So would you explain to us in terms of cutting expenditure what work has been undertaken by your department?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I have not got the figures here. We can provide you with the whole figures, which of course are published figures and have been published to the States previously, but I can provide you with them, of the amount we have had through our efficiency cuts, including for next year another £600,000, I think we have to find. It has been over £1 million in previous years. We have taken significant efficiency savings or cuts and we have had to, unfortunately, bear them in the interests of playing our part in cutting expenditure in the Island. It is significant for our budget. It has been significant. Had I been given warning I would have brought the actual figures with me, but they are all there and they have all been presented to the States in the past. We can hold our hands up and say we have played our part entirely in delivering these efficiency savings.

Mr. M. Lundy:

In percentage terms it is the same as for every States department, given that this is probably around about the second biggest budget in the States of Jersey. Obviously the financial impact in terms of hard cash is much more significant.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Last year what was the end of year budget situation in your department?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

For end of year 2006?

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Sorry, 2006.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Again, I have not got the figures in front of me. Had I been forewarned I would have brought them. So I am not going to speculate.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

We will follow up on these.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes. One of the difficulties we had, and I will say this, is that 2006 was, I think it is fair enough to say, a traumatic year for higher education, through circumstances beyond our control with the U.K. Government's decision to increase top up fees. So the budgets were adjusted in some relation, but again it is all published in the States. In fact it was published of course with the budget book in the annual reports, but we will get it to you - that information.

Mr. M. Lundy:

If, Deputy, you are referring to the fact that at the end of the year, in previous years, there has been an under spend that is usually as a consequence of the arrangements that we have with the schools. So if you bear in mind that the Jersey financial year is from January to December and the school year is from September through to August, we make a provision for schools to carry over funds at the end of the financial year in order to be able to manage the demands of the academic year. Year on, the positive carryover from schools is around about £1 million, which sound a lot of money but when you divide it up among all the schools its not a lot of money. The bulk of the carryover over the last few years has been in the fee-paying schools that have had to make provision within their own budgets for changes in the teachers' pension fund, through parental fees. Of course if you bear in mind that parental fees go through the States treasury books, those parental fees and the money that they have set aside have shown up at the end of the financial year as an under spend. It could be assumed that the Department for Education, Sport and Culture is carrying over this under spend. Why did they not use it for nursery education? Well, quite simply because it is in the schools and it is there to help the schools manage that difference.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

In fact, it is in the Hansard, there is an answer to a question in the States on that very subject within the last month.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Minister, you keep telling us that funding strategy for 3 and 4 year-olds is a high priority of yours.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It is.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What consideration have you given to re-prioritising it within your department?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Full consideration, which is why I made the answer that I cannot find it within my own budget. Now, in fact, we have just been doing an exercise on this. We have statutory obligations, policy obligations and discretionary obligations. I think 82 per cent of my budget is taken up with statutory obligations, i.e. we have to legally provide education from the ages of 5 to 16. We also have some other statutory obligations. Strangely enough, unlike the U.K. one of our non-strategy obligations is to provide a library service. But I think a library service is very important: (1) its costs would not pay for this. But, yes, these are the areas I looked at and we, as we always do, look at all areas and I do not believe it would be in the best interests of the Island or the Education, Sport and Culture Department to cut - which is what it would mean - from these other vital services.

Mr. M. Lundy:

There has been a significant exercise done on re-prioritisation because while this may be the Minister's policy in terms of initiating a new policy, there are other demands in the budget that have increased in recent years, for example, I guess due to the success of medical technology early on in a child's life. For example, Mont a L'Abbe school, which is our special needs school, the increased demand has been significant to the point that there has been about a £200,000 deficit in the budget given the increased demand on the school. The fact that for many years the Education, Sport and Culture budget has grown because people numbers have grown is something that is obviously brought to our attention quite frequently and the assumption is that as soon as people numbers start to fall that the demands on the budget will fall. Well, the cash coming into the department will fall but over a transition period it increases demands on the budget. So, for example, in a primary school where you might have 24 children in a class, say, for example, 25, 25, 26 children in a class, the money that comes into the department for about 22 children will pay for the teacher. At a time of falling rolls if you have 15

children in the class you still have to pay for the teacher but you do not have the money coming into the department to pay for the teacher. So you now have to subsidise that class. You could say why do you not rationalise your school places? You cannot do that; it takes a period of time to do that. There is an optimum time to do that. There is a tipping point in sense where it becomes the right time to do that and this is not the time. So at this point in time we are propping up primary education. We need to prop it up and the resources do not come into the department in order to be able to do that because the resources come in primary numbers and that means that we have to re-prioritise in order to be able to do that. So there are some things that you cannot avoid re-prioritisation for.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Thank you. To follow on from that, I think, are nursery classes funded by places or pupils?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

No, nursery classes are funded slightly differently.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Yes. Nursery classes are funded on the basis that each nursery class has a teacher and a teaching assistant and that is the resource that goes into the nursery class. All nursery classes are up to capacity so it is, in a sense, not an issue.

Dr. C. Hamer:

But it could become an issue?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Yes, it could become an issue.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

But we have a different funding mechanism; it is not based on an age-rated pupil unit. For nursery classes it is a teacher and an assistant fixed nursery class.

Dr. C. Hamer:

So it is a fixed class.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

A fixed class.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

During the development of your report and proposition, P.93, what research was undertaken on models

of provision for early years in other countries?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Benefits, of course, of high quality child care review of literature. This was prepared and it reviewed - I am trying to see where it reviewed literature from - but literature from Canada, the U.K., the U.S., et cetera. We have enormous research on it.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Sweden, Spain, Portugal and Italy. In fact, there is a compendium of 4 search projects which are available through the O.E.C.D. (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), very interesting reading called Babies and Bosses and a number of members of the department have read it right through.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

We understand that Mrs. Tibo(?) took a group of teachers to Italy. We understand that because she told us. How has the findings that they made there benefited local practice?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Considerably, in a number of ways. Partially in terms of the passion that nursery teachers brought back with them, but the passion that they brought with them when they came back was for a very different approach to a holistic education of the child. I shall not endeavour to go into the details that she would go into if she was here. But certainly it reflects on some of the issues that I talked about earlier on. The opportunity to bring children into develop their own ideas, creative experiences, longer-term project working. You can see that in providing this type of educational environment it could easily be disrupted if you were offering sessional places and children were popping in and out. So there is a real visionary aspiration there, I think, that has been created among nursery teachers in the Island for providing something that is very, very special for those children, 3 to 4 years old. There is vibrancy about it that we would like to make available.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

And the community involvement.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

The teachers that went on the trip, were they all from public nurseries?

Mr. M. Lundy:

They were.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Moving on to something slightly different, given that Jersey has embraced the birth to 3 framework in the foundation stage from the U.K., is it proposed to adopt the early years foundation stage and the workforce before it evolved into the early years professional ...

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Before Mario gives the detail, no offence, we rarely ever adopt anything from the U.K. without Jersey following it. What we try to do is to take the best of any initiatives, not just from the U.K. but anywhere else and change them and alter them so as to be what Jersey requires. That is with everything.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The question might be would we bring the system closer into that which existed right here because we would look to other jurisdictions. But the answer is that we are very aware of what is happening in the U.K. but bear in mind that the government in the U.K. is already putting money into the private sector. The government is putting money into the private sector in Jersey in so much as there is day care registration and the Department for Education, Sport and Culture funds an early years advisory teacher to work with the private sector. The issue might create some considerable difficulties in Jersey and would need to be handled sensitively over a longer period of time. The cost of child care is already high. The introduction of early years professionals who hold degree status and have higher aspirations in terms of earnings, could well come as a shock for some private providers. So that all has to be managed. I think the idea of a high standard of professional development, I mean, our fundamental belief is that if you want to provide quality you start with the environment and you start with the professional development and the qualifications of the staff who are working with the children. Obviously we would aspire to have every professional working with children in Jersey qualified to a highest standard. If there are opportunities to develop the concept of an early years professional in Jersey then we are well fixed to do it. We could respond in the same way as we responded when we were developing N.N.E.B. (National Nursery Examination Board (U.K.)), et cetera, et cetera, because obviously we are responsible for the knowledge of further education which also has higher education courses in it and has a thriving early years section at the moment. So we are well placed to take this forward. But as I say, we would also need to be cautious about the impact that that might have on the private sector and manage it properly.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

You just mentioned the Milio ratio from Italy, is there a proposal? Do you have any intention to take another group across there from the private sector?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I know that the private sector were interested in going across. I do not know whether any members did

go across. That is something that could be considered if there was the development of a secure partnership. What we would like to do if we are developing a sincere strategic partnership with the private sector, is to ensure that they have access to all the opportunities that people working in the public sector would have.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We already, as you know, open our training to the private sector. I have attended a number of sessions and so on and a conference where there was a very good mix of our own staff and private sector staff working very well together.

Mr. M. Lundy:

One of the most successful initiatives in Jersey in recent years has been the development of Critical Skills throughout our classrooms. That was highly acclaimed by the late Professor Ted Ragg. Critical skills you may be aware, has worked its way down into nursery education and we have made provision for the private sector to engage in the Critical Skills training with the department at no charge.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

We are aware of some nurseries who have partaken of the training. That has almost finished the first block of questions that I was set to ask. I have a couple more and then I believe my fellow panellists may want to come in, based on what you have just told us. Just going back to the 15 hours that you are proposing now ...

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We are examining.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What would be the time scale for introducing it when you have made your final decision?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The time scale for any of this is totally dependant on funding being found to deliver it. I missed out on the budget for the coming year. So if it was going to be introduced any early than the next budget round it would have to be from within the overall cash amount that has already been allocated to the States Department.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I may have missed this earlier because you have been giving some quite comprehensive responses.

Mr. M. Lundy:

If the question is how long will it take you to make it happen if the funding is available? It will take about a year.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

A different question. We have always thought the lead-in time is about a year but the funding is the question.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

To come back to what you just said, Minister, about the funding, have you yet prepared any costings for 15 hours?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

That is what is being worked on and I hope within the next couple of weeks, in fact, it might have been earlier but my Assistant Director of Finance has been ill for a few days as well.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The costings are available. What have not been completed are the models based on the assumptions of what the parental choices might be if we introduce charges. So we are trying to develop a reasonably sophisticated model so that we do not get caught short if things do not go the way ...

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It is quite easy to work it out if all the parents who have children currently in our schools bought the other 15 hours in. But our survey and other things have told us that is unlikely and what we are trying to do is look at all the options and also, of course, we need to work in to these options is it going to increase income support because we have to think of the corporate issue, is it going to reduce this or increase that in other areas? So it is more complex than just adding simple figures up.

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is very uniform in that it is based on the cost per hour. So without building in assumptions or parental take-up in nursery classes, the cost affecting hours is going to be three-quarters across the 20 hours.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

But it is not [Laughter].

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Which is why I asked the question.

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is even more calculation. It is the assumptions that create the difficulty.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, I would just like to take up a couple of things you mentioned earlier - bearing in mind, of course, you may well be looking at finding a standard unit fee, whatever, per hour - certain areas that are not perhaps level between private and public at the moment might need to be addressed. I am interested as to why Mr. Lundy, you said it is impossible to transfer self-evaluation to the private sector? Why could you not do that?

Mr. M. Lundy:

You may have misunderstood. What I am saying is that is what we would want to do. We would want to develop a model for the private sector that was similar to the model that we have in the public sector for a whole range of reasons: (a) because we believe it is a better way to reflect the practitioners. Obviously it would be externally validated so there is an external component but we would want the private sector to be actively engaged in their own self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Would it be possible for the public sector now to be the outside validator?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It would be possible but I am not sure that the private sector would be as appreciative of that model as a model where there was a degree of independence. But I think I should clarify that. The public sector uses external validation so while we are responsible for our own self-evaluation we bring externals in from the U.K. to bring that independence and we would probably wish to do the same.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

In fact, I think that we would like to extend that.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

But does that evaluation apply to the nursery class in the private sector?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It does, yes. Not as an independent entity but as part of the overall evaluation to schools.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Okay. The other thing, I may have misheard you, Mr. Lundy, again, I am sorry for that, you mentioned I am sure, the higher cost of staffing in school because you have a teacher and a teaching assistant. How does that equate the different ratios and the cost of training in the public sector and the cost of things

like First Aid certification, et cetera, which is part ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

I am not talking there about the higher cost of staffing overall, what I mean is the higher cost associated with employing a teacher.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Right, thank you. You have clarified that one.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Just one thing that has occurred to us, less than a month ago you told us you were not considering 15 hours and you are now. I wonder whether you would keep us informed with how your deliberations are going.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes. Well, I saw this as an opportunity to do just that. I was hoping that I would have had the figures for the 15 hours which we have been working on. It is an option that we are examining. I cannot remember what I said last time; I do not have the transcript in front of me, but I was reflecting on the fact and I still believe that my ultimate would be 20 hours a week. But if I could - depending on the figures - start at a lower figure, very much as the U.K. have done, and be aspirational to move up, that would still get rid of some of the inequity and ensure that all children had some opportunity of early years educational care.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Moving on to another section now which Deputy Gallichan will address.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

The next section deals with an integrated 0 to 5 strategy. What role does the Minister feel the State should take in respect of non-statutory education and care, thinking in terms of provider, partner, regulator? What is the balance you seek?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

In the 0-5?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, 0-5.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Well, I think in the 3 to 5 it is quite clear what we do at present. We are a provider and we are also a regulator through our registration system. It has never been terribly clear and it is something that the Council of Ministers are intent on developing, having a whole policy because the 0 to 3 has moved about a bit but it is primarily now under Social Security and Health. Health for the children and Social Security for the benefits they give in that area, though we have slight connections in various ways with some of the things that we are involved in including The Bridge. Something that needs to be developed in Jersey is a more holistic vision. I do not think it should be limited and I think there is a danger in having these cut-off points, 0 to 5, 5 to 16, 16 to 18 and so on. I think we really need to work on having proper vision for the family and for the whole a child's life, if you like, rather than trying to artificially divide it up into segments.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think, in terms if they are not 3 then obviously the State is currently, through the national education policy, a provider for 3 to 5 year-olds as well as a facilitator and a regulator. In terms of the 0 to 3, it is not a provider. It is a facilitator and it is a regulator.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

In our last hearing when asked whether there is a clear strategy for 0 to 5 year-olds, Mr. Lundy, you aid and I quote: "There are many elements of a clear strategy." Could I please ask you what they are?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is a very good question. I suppose the answer to that is if we were starting from here there are a number of elements if we look at it outside of the context of simply nursery education and childcare and supporting families in terms of benefits for families, in terms of maternity leave, paternity leave, et cetera, I mean, you can go into the various State elements. If you go to the paper which we included in the pack, which reviews the working group that looked into provision not to trade, you can see there that there are a number of elements that were considered but not taken forward because, in a sense, they were untimely.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Which one was that, please? What number?

Mr. M. Lundy:

In my book this is number 4. This is the Councils of Ministers' report, December 2006.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

22nd December 2006.

Mr. M. Lundy:

This looked at, in a sense, the context that existed at that point in time. When we say: “High quality early education for children 0 to 5”, we are talking about education there in the broadest context. You mentioned at the last group: “Are you collecting data on that?” You will see there is a recommendation there in terms of the collection of data. You will see that some of the things that were considered were: the impact of the benefit system on families, income support, the change from child care allowance to income support, tax relief for families. Really, those are some of the mechanisms that Government can use to support families but at this time all those mechanisms were going through some serious change. There were obviously the models about the free or means-tested provision for 3 and 4 year-olds and also there was the consideration of all the parental leave arrangements. Parental leave is a big issue around this and, of course, that was another thing that something had already started on, I think it is through the Employment forum. A consultation process has already begun on parental leave in Jersey. So when you bring those things together and there is some real joined up thinking between those things you can then start to say that you have a strategy for 0 to 5 year-olds and when the 3 to 5 year-old strategy complements the 0 to 3 year-old strategy - and in a sense it does because most of our private providers would use 3 to 5 year-old provision - to subsidise the more costly 0 to 3 year-old provision so it has an impact. Does it have an impact on families? Yes, it does because the family is paying for child care and the other 3 to 5 year-old strategy ... they are paying 0 to 3 they are not paying 0 to 5, so it is more affordable in that respect. All these things begin to relate together in a more cohesive way that makes for an Island policy, if you like, more comprehensive Island policy for 0 to 5 year-olds.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Of course, the Jersey Child Care Trust has involvement in that because part of its aim is to so-ordinate, promote and facilitate the expansion of high quality an affordable child care provision on the Island and that is from 0 onwards.

Mr. M. Lundy:

My point was you have some parental leave; you do not have statutory maternity leave. So there is something in place there. You have a child care allowance but it is moving to income support; you have something in place there. You have child care tax relief; you have something in place there. You have 3 to 5 year-old provision and the nursery education provision and you have support for the private sector in terms of their development of the foundation stage. But say you have a comprehensive strategy you have to bring all these things together so that they work together in the best interests of helping the parents reconcile ...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

So is there a delivery plan for the strategy, a time scale?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I would not say there is a time scale but if you go back to the thing we submitted for Council Ministers and so on, one of the difficulties is - again, with a limited workforce - with the income support proposals coming in it was thought it was better to get those in place and see how they impact before taking it forward and also, Social Security just have not got any spare time, with doing income support, to put officer time on to other issues and they must be involved. We are aware of this and we are aware of it particularly because we have commissioned, it was number 1 in your bundle, the first one, A Vision for the Future of Early Education and Child Care in Jersey. We present our presentative estates. That is Policy 35 of 2004. The key findings in the review are as follows and so on: "While there is a clear strategy for early years education in Jersey there is no overall States strategy for integrated early education and child care." We are working towards it and we want to work with all the other agencies involved but that does not mean we should stop work on improving our early years education and child care from 3 to 5.

Mr. M. Lundy:

From a point of clarification, I mean, you will be aware that the States of Jersey itself, I mean, obviously politically, but in terms of the development of the Civil Service as well in working up towards a new joined up delivery of public services. If you look at the paper - which I think is the third paper, at the beginning of it - it lays the responsibilities of each States department at that time for early years. Now, it was only at this point in time, you bear in mind the Department for Education, Sport and Culture had no responsibility for 0 to 3 year-olds and was pursuing an early education policy and brought this to the attention of the Council of Ministers that there is no single States department responsible for 0 to 3 year-olds. The Department for Education, Sport and Culture took the lead in forming an integrated working group. But as the Minister quite rightly says, capacity in the Civil Service in Jersey is an issue when it comes to these major initiatives. When you have the Treasury working on a new tax system, you have the Social Security Department working on a new system of income support then this was not a programmed project in which resources were allocated to and it probably needs to be.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Leading on then, who is going to be responsible for co-ordinating it and steering it through?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The group is likely to be reformed. It was under Mario last time it was pulling all this together with, obviously, the Ministers involved being the political parent and we know there is work to be done on that. But I - and I just want to go back to this - have a responsibility for 3 to 5 year-olds and early years education and I am trying to address that responsibility and I do not want that to get lost in trying to achieve an overall vision which may take even longer and some of which I have no control of.

Mr. M. Lundy:

If I could take you, Deputy Gallichan, to the report that went to the Council of Ministers, I think this is item 4.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

That is the 22nd December 2006 one, again?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Yes, under 65, one of the recommendations that came out of this. We touched on this at the Scrutiny Panel the last time that we met, which was around a more holistic framework for children in the Island of Jersey. The recommendation of the working group at the time was that the Department for Health and Social Services and the Department for Education, Sport and Culture begin to develop a framework that would support the greater integration of services for all children in Jersey and make recommendations for a strategic Government model to support its delivery. Now, that is the big piece of work. That is Jersey's Every Child Matters agenda. I think that will work around early years and obviously, work around the health of young people, children, their safety, their education, et cetera, so it will be a much more holistic approach. I see some of this work coming under that framework.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Leading on from that, I have 2 extra issues there: firstly, this is not to level criticism it is just to ask that was obviously a report of December last year. That work at the moment has not had ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

No, some of the groundwork for that has already started but this is a major piece of work and it has to be programmed. Of course, one of the reasons that we have strategic and business planning is not just that we get things done; it is that we have the capacity to get things done. So this has to form part of our strategic plan and our business plan for the next year or so.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Health and Social Services, of course, as I mentioned before with Social Security and Income Support, health and Social Services have been very actively developing New Directions, their whole new policy, for the health area which is taking up a lot of their policy development time.

Mr. M. Lundy:

As you are aware, there have been some real challenges around the Children agenda in Jersey this year which have absorbed a considerable amount of time.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

So, just one very quick point of clarification, at this moment in time, who still has responsibility for 0 to 3? That is not your department?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It is not, no. I would say the main responsibility is under the Children's Law, which was some years ago - 10, 11 years ago, I think - switched from Education to Health and Social Services and that comes directly under the health and Social Services Minister.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The Minister's responsibility for 0 to 3 is by way of child protection in terms of the registration arrangements for private nurseries and Social Security's responsibility is around support for parents and as the Minister said, health and Social Services is around Child Welfare.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you. A slightly different topic now; in the business plan concerning the division of lifelong learning, the objective was contributing to the establishment of an integrated policy and strategy of child care and early years, based on a well-defined regulatory policy and partnership agreement between all the stake holders and the target to carry out a consultation exercise to determine the impact of regulatory policy and the youth policy in the light of feedback, that was by November 2007. What was the consultation exercise and what were the findings?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Well, this piece of work has not come to a conclusion yet. It would have been helpful if Dr. Sandra Mountford had been able to attend today but unfortunately she is off. Dr. Mountford has led that piece and at the end of that piece of work will present a full report to the Minister.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

What is the regulatory policy? Is it consistent across the different settings, family day care, parish nursery providers, et cetera?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Well, it is all contained in the day care regulation law and the policy documentation that is associated with that which I assume you have had a copy of?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Also I say again, Dr. Mountford is the expert, if I can put it like that, in this area. Yes, it is consistently applied.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

We do not have a copy of that.

Mr. M. Lundy:

You do not have a copy of that. So, you need a copy of the daycare registration policy.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Who are the members of the partnership and what is the partnership agreement?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Sorry, which partnership?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

In the objective: "There will be a partnership agreement between all stakeholders."

Mr. M. Lundy:

Sorry, yes. The members of the partnership will be the private and public sector providers who would be subject to regulation.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Also, this is planned regarding the division of schools and colleges: "The objective was to develop and implement an integrated strategy for early years and ..."

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think we have done that.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

... indicated all 0 to 5 year-olds have access to a form of high quality early child education and care programmes and that a review of support for families with children 0 to 5 be completed. The targets across departmental senior officer group established to develop strategy. Any necessary structural recommendations are implemented and this will be done by 2008." Has the cross-department senior officer group been established and what progress has been made?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Well, it was established and because of a number of issues I would not say it was put on hold but it had to take a step back and will be refocusing its efforts. Again, I have referred to income support and New Directions in health and our own issues because we do not have an array of policy officers at our beck and call. We have to prioritise whatever they are working in

Mr. M. Lundy:

If I could just give a practical example of some of the difficulties in that: had we been working with the knowledge that we had of the child care alliance, and obviously, that is something that has been in existence for some time, we could have made some assumptions, we could have made some recommendations as to how that system might have been changed to benefit children and families. When we were looking at that aspect, but as an officer group, the Social Security Department were still working through the scenarios, as far as income support was concerned, and were not able to give us the information. So we would have been making recommendations about something which we did not know anything about. So, hence, the view was taken that these new systems need to be brought in; they need to be embedded, we need to see what they look like and then be able to recommend the changes. I guess you could say that had we been engaged at the very beginning of the development of these systems, then we could probably have taken a more active role in developing that policy.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Are you able to give me any indication as to who was on the group? Has it had any meetings at all?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It has because it produced this report.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Of course, yes. [Laughter]

Mr. M. Lundy:

But the group does not exist at the moment and what we would do is reform and make sure that the people who were on the group had, obviously, appropriate knowledge of it.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

For example, Mario was leading the group but he is going to become Director of Education, Sport and Culture rather than Assistant Director of Schools and Colleges. So we have to make a decision as to our representative. Social Security makes a decision as to theirs, Health and so on.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Minister, you have also told us that ... I think I have done all of mine.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I am glad to say you are getting through it a bit more speedily with Deputy Gallichan asking questions than with me. Deputy Pitman has a few questions now for you both.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Right, absolutely.

Deputy S. Pitman:

A few of them have already been answered so I have not got many for you. It is really regarding working with departments and different bodies. The first one; at the joint meeting on 15th September 2005, it was agreed that the assistant director of Education would chair a working party of officers with officers of that department and your department. The first task was to produce a position paper. What was the membership of this working party? That includes Fiona Bakker(?) from the J.C.C.T. (Jersey Childcare Trust).

Mr. M. Lundy:

Sorry, it did include Fiona from the J.C.C.T.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Is the rest of it here?

Deputy S. Pitman:

What would be the rest of the membership?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Can you remember?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I have not got the names but the departments that were represented were Social Security, obviously Education, Sport and Culture, the Public Services Department and Treasury.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We can get you the names.

Mr. M. Lundy:

We can get you the names.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We will have a minute of the meeting.

Deputy S. Pitman:

What duration did the party last? What was the outcome?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The outcome was a report to the Council of Ministers which you have been provided with. Again, Mario, you might remember but we can look back and find out how many times it met.

Mr. M. Lundy:

It happens I can tell you that straight off because as far as I recall it certainly met for one extended period. In May it met twice but it determined that it could not pursue the work in the way that had been expected because of the issues that we talked about earlier on, the fact that the tax system was changing, income support was being introduced and we were being asked to make recommendations about systems that had not yet been introduced. So there was a recognition at that time that you just could not do that. These systems would have to be embedded before we could recommend any changes to them. As I said, an alternative approach might have been at the outset when the changes to income tax were being considered years ago, or a few years ago now, and income support. Had we a more joined up system of Government at that point in time - ministerial government, in a sense - it probably would have done things differently.

Deputy S. Pitman:

So who should have approached you?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

When?

Deputy S. Pitman:

At the beginning.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Well, this is going back ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

I was chairing the group and I approached Senator Vibert.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

But you are going back to when it would have been ...

Deputy S. Pitman:

I am talking about when they first started talking about income support.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

This is going back to child care allowances and child care taxes; it is going back over a decade - before my time.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The thing to do is put this into the context, into the political context. These changes started pre ministerial government. The drive towards ministerial government has led to greater cohesion in the public service and, therefore, a greater appreciation of the benefits of joined up working. So what I am saying is that had these projects been started under ministerial government we might have started it in a different way.

Deputy S. Pitman:

So you are saying it is down to the structure of government.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think the structure of government, the structure of public services had an influence there.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I think at the time if you go back we have outlined who was responsible for various things in 0 to 3: Employment and Social Security, Child Care Allowance, Maternity Allowance, Maternity Grant, Family Allowance, Home Responsibility Allowance, Treasury and Resources, Child Care Tax Credits, Health and Social Services, Family Support, Child Protection, Welfare and ourselves, Nursery Class Provision, Regulation of Independent Child Care Provision, Political Sponsor for Jersey Childcare Trust. All those have come in at different times over a very long period. I suppose, with the benefit of incredible hindsight, if anybody had been that farsighted to pull everything together and think, 20 years ago when some of these things first came in, we should have a ... some of these things did not even exist then, were not even thought of. So it is being critical of what has happened previously. I think the point we are making is that with the current system of government it enables us to work more closely together rather than the previous committee system where there was a much more cumbersome mechanism for consultation and discussion between committees. I used to chair, on occasions, a group of 3 committees which was over 20 people because some were on more than one committee. Trying to get 20 States Members - finding a time for them to meet, et cetera, and trying to get decisions and so on, because they could not make decisions then, they had to go back to their own meetings of committee and make the decision. Ministerial government makes it that much easier because Ministers have the responsibility and can make decisions and you have only to get a couple of people together to do it rather than 20 odd.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Furthermore, I think it is important to appreciate the context, which has changed dramatically. If you go back to round about 1984 where there was a drive to increase the number particularly of women in the workplace and bring mothers back into the workplace. There was a drive to stimulate the child care industry, for want of a better word. At that time there was the beginnings of a nursery education policy. Both these things were perceived to be very good things. There was not a perception of inequity at the time but then there was not a thriving private sector. As nursery education grew the private sector grew and the dissatisfaction that has emanated from that; that which was a good policy has had side effects. The dissatisfaction is around parents who see other people getting a free place while they are having to pay and private providers who see the public sector in direct competition with them. So the context has changed and the urgency to address the 3 to 5 year-olds has obviously become more acute. What has been said this time around is if we are going to address this we are not going to address nicely. We need to look at all the policies in respect of 0 to 5 year-olds to make sure that they complement each other.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Of course, the parents who are lucky enough to benefit from our nursery classes are very complimentary to our nursery class and think it is a wonderful system. Unfortunately, under the preset system only 50 per cent of parents can benefit in that way but as to that 50 per cent, I can assure you, I do not have the complaints from.

Deputy S. Pitman:

You brought in the 3 to 4s proposal in the last few weeks, if that had got through how does that complement the new Income Support scheme? I just really want to know how much consultation you did with Social Security on that proposal.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Social Security were involved informally, the whole way through the discussions, I mean, the whole way through the policy Social Security had an opportunity to consider the nursery education policy and to look at the implications for them and Social Security were involved with the Treasury in modelling the various scenarios that came out of it. Much of this work was done across our officers emails and spreadsheets and this very complex numerical work. But you are asking what the impact was. In developing the models, based on certain assumptions, the impact was around paying additional income support to parents who do not get it at the moment because they have a free nursery place and assessing the impact also, this is from the Treasury perspective on child care relief, of providing child care tax relief to parents who then have to pay for free nursery classes. So that was the big impact.

Deputy S. Pitman:

I think you have already answered this question but I will ask it again, we were wondering why ... because Mr. Lundy earlier spoke about: "We could not go forward with this until the new income

support system had bedded in.” So it sounded as if everything has been put on hold for some time pending the outcome of how it works.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The whole 0 to 5?

Deputy S. Pitman:

Yes.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes. In effect, it was because we did not have the capacity to do it.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think the point is that a new income support system has been introduced. I would not want to give the impression that it has all been put on hold pending something happening. The new income support system has been introduced which takes a kind of child care 0 to 5.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Did you do any work - I think this is what Deputy Pitman was referring to really - with Social Security to develop that child care element within the income support scheme?

Mr. M. Lundy:

We discussed the child care element with them and the Jersey Childcare Trust also discussed the child care element with them in terms of the likely impact on nursery classes. But if you mean were we engaged in any of the calculations around what benefits would be provided? No, we were not.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I would say do you consider that you had enough input?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I do not consider that we would have had the expertise to give them additional input in those areas of their department as well as expertise by that.

Deputy S. Pitman:

Do you believe that your department could have worked more closely with Economic Development and the Health Department in the development of a 0 to 5 strategy?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We started and we did look at this. Again, we have tried to explain for various reasons including seeing how income support is going to work; that this is something that needs to be worked on and we will be working on it. Certainly the Island does need to consider this area but as I said before, I am loath to section off into 0 to 5, I much prefer to look in a more realistic way at the whole issue and I think we need to do that.

Mr. M. Lundy:

A good example, if you go back to the strategy, if you look at the sort of vision for the future you will see in there that the development of an integrated centre was one of the objectives and that centre has been developed in conjunction with a number of States agencies and particularly Health and Social Services. So I think that the agencies engaged in The Bridge, the way that they work together, bearing in mind that there is a very, very small revenues budget for The Bridge, The Bridge operated on the basis that States departments have contributed the resources from within their existing budgets to make The Bridge happen. The Bridge is an example of very good inter-agency work leading to a significant benefit for children and families. So, I would say that that is probably one of the shining examples of inter-agency co-operation. In terms of working with Economic Development, I think, as I said at the beginning, it could be argued that in order to get this strategy through, one could have emphasised more the economic benefits, but when you have already have the highest rate of working women in Europe the point was to emphasise the educational benefits. That is what the Minister wanted to do. He wanted this to be about the education of children as opposed to simply about providing child care support for families.

Deputy S. Pitman:

Who approached who in this working relationship?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Well, if you take the example of The Bridge. The Bridge was the Minister's idea as far as developing an integrated centre and I was sent out to have discussions with the other departments in order to gain their co-operation which, I have to say, was very easy to get. So, the Department for Education, Sport and Culture initiated it but had no trouble in getting support. All the departments that were involved were very enthusiastic about it.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I think it is one of the best examples of cross-departmental co-operational because we had the resource, an empty primary school premises which we were determined would not be let as has happened in the past in some States agencies to fall into disrepair in an area where it could quite easily be vandalised and so on. So, I was determined - or the department - that we would find a very good use for it as quickly as possible and we came up with this integrated centre idea and I am really pleased with the co-operation

we have from the other departments because it enabled it to be established at very low revenue cost because everybody put in the resources. I think now it is a shining example of what can be achieved and, hopefully, we can achieve more in the future.

Deputy S. Pitman:

What are the governance arrangements of The Bridge?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The governance arrangements for The Bridge: really, the manager of The Bridge is accountable to each other's executive but as an employee of the Department of Education, Sport and Culture. So, in terms of line management, in terms of salary, et cetera, that comes through from the Department of Education, Sport and Culture. But to all intents and purposes, it comes under the auspices of the Children's Executive and, therefore, the corporate parents.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The Children's Executive comprises of senior officers from a number of departments and the corporate parent for the Children's Executive are the Ministers of Health, Home Affairs and Education.

Deputy S. Pitman:

In the previous hearing you informed us that the Children's Executive was formed on the recommendation of the *Bull Report*. What is its brief, key task and what has it delivered to date?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Well, that is a very wide-ranging question which is another whole area; we can give you a book on that because it was after the *Bull Report*. We went into it ... unless you want me to talk for the next hour or so about the Children's Executive ...

Deputy S. Pitman:

Can you clarify? When we hear the term Children's Executive, what is it?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The Children's Executive, okay. The Children's Executive developed to meet the needs of children in the Island with severe emotional behavioural difficulties (S.E.B.D.). It is a very specific function. It was to bring together, following the *Bull Report*, the Ministers of Health, Social Services, Education, Sport and Culture and Home Affairs to ensure a partnership that delivered joined up thinking, decision making and planning for that specific group of children.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

So is the Children's Executive those 3 Ministers?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The corporate parent is those 3 Ministers.

Mr. M. Lundy:

No, those are the governance arrangements of the 3 Ministers and the 3 Ministers are served by the Children's Executive and the Children's Executive are the officers who are responsible for the services for S.E.B.D. children and while the Children's executive would wish to ensure, for example, that in respect of early years that the youngest children who might be vulnerable who might even at the earliest D.H.B.(?), demonstrating emotional and behavioural difficulties, the primary function of the work is much broader than that and its relationship to this strategy is only in that area.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Tangential.

Deputy S. Pitman:

Could you give us, just briefly, a couple of things on what it has been up to?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The Children's Executive?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The Children's Executive? The development of the Greenfield secure suite; the rebuilding of that. The introduction of a youth action team to work with juvenile delinquents on the Island - this is off the top of my head - the development of a more focussed therapeutic counselling service that C.A.M.H.S. (Child and Adult Mental Health Service); the engagement of school counsellors in our secondary schools; attendance officers in the schools; behaviour support teachers. It is a very comprehensive set of items that have come from the Children's Executive that probably could be a whole series of scrutiny in itself.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The ethos behind it is to break down any barriers or silos that were there before between the different delivery agents so that we have become much more cohesive and there is better understanding between everybody. As I said, it is a big area.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Thank you, Deputy Pitman. We have finished that section - racing through now. Back to me. We do not want to have to come back again if the States decide to do. We are looking now at other

partnerships at E.S.C. (Education, Sport and Culture), particularly the J.C.C.T. and the C.A.G. (Comptroller and Auditor General) recommended a settled model of organisation of the J.C.C.T. Has that been agreed by the department? Has it been set up?

Mr. M. Lundy:

We touched on this last time. This is a rule of the J.C.C.T. It will depend very much on the strategy that is implemented. The J.C.C.T. at the moment performs a number of functions. One of the issues that the C.A.G. has with the J.C.C.T. was around its raising sponsorship for early years. Since that report the J.C.C.T. has put quite a bit of endeavour into that and has been quite successful in raising sponsorship. The C.A.G. proposed a couple of models in which the Jersey Childcare Trust could be an executive arm of the department and other where it could be an obvious champion for children arguably given that it is a government sponsored organisation, I am not quite sure. Then there was a third model which was slightly more complex and I cannot exactly recall at the moment. But the model that we were considering as we review the future of the Jersey Childcare Trust as it stands at the moment, could have been around an executive wing of the department developing working with the private sector, partly(?) under contract for wages - finding arrangements, because it already has experience at that and, therefore, minimising any additional bureaucracy from the department. As a champion for children, obviously, but also I think as an agency that would develop into more of a children's information service as opposed to simply a focussed Jersey Childcare Trust along the lines of a development of a children's information service in the U.K.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

We wondered, in fact, if the proposed 3 and 4 year-old position would determine whether the J.C.C.T.'s role would, in fact, change?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I think it would. One of the reports you had was, what we call, the *Spat(?) Report*, which looked very much at this and we acted upon that report and we refocused with the Jersey Child Care Trust there, what they should be doing, and when, I will not say if, when we convince the States that we should be offering some aspect of universal free education and care for 3 to 5 year-olds, we will have to look again as to how this affects, depending which model is adopted, the relationship and the vision for the Jersey Child Care Trust. The Jersey Child Care Trust works with us and is well aware of it.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Just coming back to the private childcare providers, what support do you believe your department gives to them?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Quite a lot. Do you want to itemise it, Mario?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Yes. I think you will see the nature of the support when you see the day care registration policy. The policy, at the moment, is designed to be a supportive policy in the sense that it is not simply a pure inspection. It is designed to help the private sector achieve the standards, any minimum standards we would wish to see in any national grid in the Island. So it is not punitive. It is not simply finding fault and leaving the providers to deal with that themselves. It is working with providers to support them. In terms of training, we have already given some examples of how we have engaged the private sector in training. Some of those examples at no cost to the private sector although, of course, every time the private sector do send somebody on training, there is an innate cost, an inherent cost there for them. I think probably one of the biggest moves was the appointment last year within Education, Sport and Culture. This was an appointment that was sponsored by the Jersey Child Care Trust before that but we appointed to the Department of Education, Sport and Culture a full-time teacher, advisor to work solely with the private sector at no cost to the private sector.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

How do they deliver that service?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The advisory teacher?

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Yes.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The advisory teacher simply goes out to the private nurseries and works with the professionals at the front line, looking at the delivery of the foundation curriculum, the skills, the strategies. From an educationalist's perspective, I almost tend to talk about the classroom strategies that we use but the strategies you would use to work with young children, the planning ...

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

What hours is the advisory employed for?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Full-time teacher, so the same as any other teacher.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

You mentioned, Mr. Lundy, the minimum standards. Are the standards purely for Jersey? Have they been taken from the U.K.; have they evolved as Jersey standards?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The standards have been around for some time and have been shaped over time and have recently been shaped again. I could not tell you whether they were taken from the U.K. in the beginning; I cannot go back that far. I do know that we have had a tendency in the past to look at what has been happening in the U.K. and to take it and to adapt it, and in recent years, we have probably had more confidence to think for ourselves about what is best for Jersey and not necessarily always going to the U.K. first. We have taken mind of it but not necessarily copied it, so I think those standards have been developed, best practice, and the U.K. would be in there but also some of them take the local context.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Dr. Mountford and others, they are constantly under review to see whether they can be improved.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I think it highlights the importance of us needing to speak to Dr. Mountford as well. We come back to Deputy Gallichan now, thank you.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I think Deputy Pitman has something.

Deputy S. Pitman:

With regard to training, you are probably aware that the T.E.P. (Training and Employment Partnership) funding was withdrawn and also I believe courses that train people in the higher management, I think it is Level 4 ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

N.V.Q. 4 (National Vocational Qualifications).

Deputy S. Pitman:

That funding has been increased, the fees for that have increased. Obviously those 2 things together have put much more pressure on private providers. I just want to know your response to that and if you endeavour to support private providers and if you have, in what way.

Mr. M. Lundy:

To my knowledge, there have been no financial support directed to private providers from the Department of Education, Sport and Culture for this and if T.E.P. has withdrawn the funding, we have

not sought to substitute for that. I think, as I mentioned earlier on, in developing the cost per hour and arriving at a cost per hour for initial education, we are building into that some expectation that there might be funding in there to assist in training and, as I have said earlier on, in terms of the professional development, not necessarily the qualification route but the skills route for early years' workers, the department has been very active in engaging early years' professionals in the private sector in our own training programmes. If there is no funding for that level of qualification, I am sure this is an issue that would be high on the agenda of any strategic partnership. It is something we, as a department, would probably advise the Minister to do something about but, at the same time, that does not mean we would have the resources to do it. So that would obviously be something we would have to look at but we certainly want to make sure that Jersey has a well qualified, highly skilled workforce in early years.

Deputy S. Pitman:

Have you talked to Economic Development about this?

Mr. M. Lundy:

We are in talks with Economic Development about a number of issues at the moment in respect of funding across the 2 departments. This will be one of those issues I am sure but there are many issues that we are talking about.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Are there any other issues specific to early years that you are discussing with E.D.D. (Economic Development Department)?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Probably not.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Just one final point. Was there any dialogue between T.E.P. and yourselves before the funding was withdrawn?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I would certainly have to check.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think the funding that was withdrawn was not just for the early years. I know there was some dialogue. I cannot talk to you about it because I have not been the officer responsible for liaison with Economic Development.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

If we had been given notice, we could have given you a better answer.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I think it is an important question because it has been highlighted to us by a number of private providers that this withdrawal of funding has seriously hit them as regards the training of their staff.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I will check but as far as I am aware, they have not highlighted that with us and certainly not to me in direct face to face meetings I have had.

Mr. M. Lundy:

There is a parallel initiative at the moment which is around the development of the Skills Executive for Jersey, similar in some ways to the Children's Executive which is the responsibility of 3 Ministers and obviously the Minister of Health ...

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

That is not up and running yet though, is it?

Mr. M. Lundy:

No and people will be going to the Ministers in the next week or 2 in respect of that.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The next Council Ministers' Meeting, I believe.

Mr. M. Lundy:

That again, another example of developing a structure of joined up government looking at skills across the piece and that is clearly something where the whole concept of development of early years in training et cetera would be discussed.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Who is compiling that paper for the Council?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The Economic Development has taken the lead on that and there is a working group.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

You are contributing.

Mr. M. Lundy:

We have an officer engaged in that working group.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

That is the place where you will be referring to the funding that was withdrawn, is it, on how it has impacted upon the skills?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is a bigger issue. It is recognition because this is not just a challenge for early years. It is a challenge for the Island. The skill is a deficit in a context where there is high employment; it has produced obviously some considerable challenges for the Island, so that the Skills Executive is looking at the big picture in respect of that and clearly, it will not just be about early years, it will be about skills ...

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

In your deposition to the Council or to the E.D.D. before they prepare the report, will you draw their attention to the fact that the skills bank is maybe being diminished because the T.E.P. funding was taken away?

Mr. M. Lundy:

This is a strategic paper. I do not think it will go into that detail.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I am mindful of the time. I believe Deputy Gallichan has some further questions.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Yes, I have indeed, thank you. This is basic strategy detail. How is the quality of early years' child care and education assessed? Are there assurance frameworks, quality assurance frameworks for these?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

In the public sector, the private sector, both, which?

The Deputy of St. Mary:

It could be both.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Yes, there are. Obviously this is another reason why you might wish to speak to Dr. Mountford because there are quality assurance frameworks that are used in the private sector. I am struggling to find the

acronym, I am sure it will come to me.

Dr. Cathy Hamer:

There are quite a number of those; about 30 or 40 quality assurance frameworks. The one we had referred to us today is M.D.M.A.(?)

Mr. M. Lundy:

Okay. The day care registration team have developed a quality assurance framework around, what I believe to be, our X.R.(?) and I am lost on the second acronym, but the quality assurance framework which Dr. Mountford will need to take you through in detail, is looking at obviously the quality of the environment; it is looking at the quality of the interaction between the nursery providers, the staff and the children; it is looking at the experiences of the children and it looks at the outcomes of the children in terms of their confidence, their capacity, language et cetera. In the nursery classes, we have adapted a foundation profile which is for every child in terms of looking at the progress of children and quite clearly, we are responsible for the environments and the training of staff and the evaluation of staff, so there is a range of frameworks in place in the school setting including the performance review in the nursery classroom. Observation of teachers will be a common practice as it is right through the schools in Jersey; looking at planning and looking at the outcomes of children and particularly their initial profiles.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Has any consideration been given to nursery classes providing wraparound child care either by the school or in conjunction with private providers and I am also interested to hear if there any thought about extending holiday cover provision to that age group?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Using the premises do you mean, which is slightly different in extending the nursery classes which is the classes; the teacher and the assistant in there.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Using the premises; a holiday club like ...

Senator M.E. Vibert:

There are a number of affairs that we can ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

There are play schemes at the moment but not for this age range. If we developed a partnership with the private sector, there is the possibility that we could share our premises, so that something could be

developed with qualified professionals during holiday times. We have had a pilot scheme working at one of the primary schools where there was a wraparound care facility and the wraparound care facility was managed by the private sector, voluntary sector, I think Centrepoint. I cannot say it was highly successful. There were some challenges to overcome and I think the challenges were around different philosophies, the expectations of educationalists during the school day, the expectations of professionals working with children at the end of the school day. I am not saying these are hurdles that could not be overcome. It was a pilot and these are some of the challenges that we found. The strategy that the Minister has developed, of course, was designed to minimise wraparound care which, while it is a necessity, can also be less desirable than a continuous experience through the course of the day. One of the difficulties of the current situation is where children are placed somewhere at 7.00 a.m. in the morning because the parents are off to work and then picked up at 8.00 a.m. in the morning to be taken to nursery class to be picked up at 3.00 p.m. in the day to be taken somewhere else until 6.00 p.m. and it was thought that the strategy might minimise the use of wraparound care although recognise that wraparound care was an essential part of the overall picture. The partnership, the pilot was discontinued.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Can you tell us which partner ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

Janvrin School with Centrepoint. It still continues but Centrepoint have preferred to have their own premises on site now and to manage it within those premises.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

In the earlier hearing, you mentioned that 170 parents had appealed for nursery class places. Can you tell me what was the appeals' procedure; what is the appeals' procedure?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

They contacted us. Not all of them went through to an appeal because there was a different way of doing the appeal and we could not find out the exact numbers. The appeals' procedure, as you know, everything has to have an appeals' procedure and the ultimate appeal, I delegate that to my assistant minister, Deputy Fox, who sits with a senior officer, usually the director himself, and an independent and they hear the appeal. Usually people come in person; they hear the appeal and give a decision.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Would you know how many of those appeals were successful and what implications any positive results have for the nursery classes?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I would have to look up the figures. Again, given notice, we could have had the figures for you. We obviously are restrained by the number of places we have available. Every class is oversubscribed and the difficulty with appeals is we have a set of criteria we try and outline in the States with ratings on them and really, it is very difficult. When the class is full, if a lot of appeals were successful, one, it would be said that your criteria has not been applied terribly well because you do not have a lot of successful appeals and (2) unless you increase the classes beyond their maximums, you would have to displace someone who is already there to allow in somebody else. It is a very, very difficult issue when you have oversubscription to the level we have and that is why we have to have these criteria that we give weightings to. Unfortunately, there are a lot of unsuccessful and unhappy parents who do not get offered a place.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Is the department aware of what happens to those unsuccessful parents? Is there a follow-up?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

As far as I am aware, there is not. We do not always go back every week and say: "What are you doing, what happened?" but we are aware that usually, I say usually, there is a combination, but parents will want the provision of the States free provision for a number of reasons. One could be because they are very keen on education provision and another driving factor, of course, is the cost and it can be a combination of both and usually is a combination of both. What we do know is there are enough spaces in the combined sector, the private sector and the public sector, to cater for the whole cohort.

Mr. M. Lundy:

In terms of support for those parents who are seeking a private sector place, although if the D.C.A. (Department of Constitutional Affairs) registration team are aware of places and are aware of people seeking places, they will bring the 2 together. This is one of the roles that the Jersey Child Care Trust plays because the Jersey Child Care Trust is there to assist parents with finding Child Care places.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

As a panel, we are aware that currently there are 31 children in each of the nursery classes. I believe the target is 30. Is that a policy change?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It is not a policy change. I was alluding to it before. If we allow an appeal and the class is full, the only way we can allow an appeal is by making an exception to allowing one more in the class because really, you cannot, after a child has started or parents have been told they can have a place, take that place away. So that is how that has grown up.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Occasionally, if there is a child that is in very vulnerable circumstances and we become aware of that, we would take action to ...

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Just like an emergency.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes. Circumstances can change quite suddenly and the need suddenly is there.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

On the basis that there is an extra person in each one at the moment, has the funding for the unit been increased?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

No. It is fixed funding; a teacher and an assistant.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Okay, of course. Does the department feel that the current early years' provision adequately caters for children whose second language is English?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

In that case, the "if not" question falls away. Is any support offered to the private sector in this respect?

Mr. M. Lundy:

No, apart from the fact obviously that there is a providing issue for the private sector.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Are there any thoughts about any extra provision in the private sector in that area at the moment?

Mr. M. Lundy:

No.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Thank you. I like short answers.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

As far as I am aware, it is not something the private sector has come to us about.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I think that is my allocation.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I would just like to come in with a question there. Minister, you said you feel that the early years' provision does adequately cater for the children with English as a second language. Can you explain how it does?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes, again. In answer to the States the other day as well, we work very much on provision of extra staff and support where children have English as a second language.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Are you talking about in the public sector now?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

In the public sector.

Mr. M. Lundy:

We have an English additional language team in the public sector.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I think specifically in the public sector.

Mr. M. Lundy:

We have an English additional language team who work with schools. I will not give you the numbers off the top of my head; I might get them wrong, but it is teachers and teaching assistants who work across the schools with the professionals who are working with the children in order to help them develop strategies for assisting those children in developing English language.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Can I just come back to what you were saying earlier about the capacity is 30 in each nursery class but if you have an appeal, perhaps you may stretch it to 31? I rather gathered from one of the witnesses who

spoke to us earlier this week that most of the classes now have 31. Is that correct?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

They are all as a result or the result of an appeal. Is that correct? These extra children.

Mr. M. Lundy:

In the first instance, we try to not go over 30, bearing in mind that there are really no surprises in this. Every year our classes are full and we try not to go over 30. Bear in mind that we try to take steps before the admissions are done to ensure that those in the greatest need are placed, so we take information from The Bridge, we take information from Parenting, we take information from head teachers who may have older siblings in the school who can advise us of the family in need and we try to ensure that those people get offered a place first. Then we try to ensure that the information given on application forms that suggest other families might be in need of getting a place and we hold the number at 30 and that means if there is an appeal, we could go to 31.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Who has the final decision as to whether to take an extra child? Is it from centrally within the department or is the decision of the head?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We would discuss with the head teachers. To be quite honest, it is my decision finally, I would say and I would delegate that to my assistant director of Schools and Colleges. The 30 is what we would like to stick to but we appreciate when we have appeals and there are deserving cases that we will move up one and that is a decision we make.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Deputy Pitman, back to you.

Deputy S. Pitman:

What support, if any, does the department provide to disabled children and those with special needs who are attending child care in the private sector?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I would need to clarify the exact arrangements but obviously, we provide educational psychologist support for children of families across the Island regardless of whether they are in early years'

provisions or not, so there is educational psychologist support.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Can I say as well; children with special needs would come very high up our list for admission into our own nursery classes is the first thing and I would be very surprised if any child, with the sort of needs you are outlining whose parent applied, would not be accommodated, they would be accommodated.

Deputy S. Pitman:

How do you identify a disabled child?

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is done through the proper assessment procedures which depending on the nature of the disability, it might be Health and Social Services, it might be through the Educational Psychologist Services. It would be through some form of multi-agency assessment and there are standard procedures that would apply for any child with special needs at any age.

Deputy S. Pitman:

If you had a child that was just on the borderline of what the States would assess a disabled child is and they were attending private sector nursery care, what support ... you just said you offer child psychology, what other support?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The Jersey Child Care Trust has a scheme to support children in private nurseries. The nature of the support could be a range of things. It could be in terms of operators; it could be in terms of one to one support, additional teaching assistance support. It is all really based on the needs of the child.

Deputy S. Pitman:

Do you have many children in that sort of category at the moment?

Mr. M. Lundy:

We do, in a sense. It would probably be 20 per cent of our school population has special needs of some form or other, so one would expect a similar percentage of early youth population to have special needs.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

If it is a physical disability, we have schools especially designed to cope, a special version, depending on what it is. Our hearing provision is in the new St. Clements school, for example. Bel Royal is a school for physically handicapped and Monte La Vie(?) have specialist provisions.

Deputy S. Pitman:

The progress report that was published in December 2006 states: "Successful planning for early years should be based on accurate indicators of demand including demographics, trends in the use of child care and parental preferences. There are a number of observations regarding unavailable data." Do you have the document in front of you?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes. Which page is it?

Deputy S. Pitman:

4.4: "The extend of the potential demand for child care for babies and children aged up to 2 years is not accurately known."

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Correct.

Deputy S. Pitman:

Is that information that you could provide us?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

No. That is why it is unknown. The demand for this age range, 0 to 2, I presume one could only find out that demand by each time surveying the parents involved. I do not quite know how one would do it. Of course, at the present, this falls outside our remit, the 0 to 2 years, but I do not know how else one would find out the potential demand except by asking and surveying parents and that would change every year.

Mr. M. Lundy:

This is one of the issues we have asked the Jersey Child Care Trust to look at for us and also to properly connect with the annual social survey to see if we can build in some questions to the annual social survey which would give us some sort of indication but bearing in mind that the annual social survey is only a sample of the population. You are not sure you are going to get the right data. There is something around that. One of the things that we are quite ... the number of children in each quota is pretty much the same most years. It is roundabout 1,000. What makes it difficult for us is I do not think we have an accurate handle on, for example, the numbers of unregistered ... the use of unregistered child care, so in assessing demand, people may not admit there is a demand because they are not going to pay for it anyway and because they may make alternative arrangements. It is difficult to get that information. It is probably more accurate in a bigger jurisdiction but such small numbers in small fluctuations clearly make a difference.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

You will have noticed some frantic note passing between us because as we realised that other questions we have already identified have been answered, we are just trying to reduce our time down. Briefly I would just like to ask what support and information the department provides to parents; 0 to 5?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The Jersey Child Care Trust is the agency and it is outlined in the papers of what their job is and so forth. Certainly for 0 upwards for children, that is one of the primary and really focussed roles of the Jersey Child Care Trust is to provide information for parents. I think it is in their terms of reference in their whole thing which I am sure I can find here.

Deputy S. Pitman:

How can parents find out that the Jersey Child Care Trust provides this information?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

That is part of the Jersey Child Care Trust role which is to ensure it is known and all social workers or doctors, midwives, all the people when the child is born and pre-birth, pre and post-natal, have information about the Jersey Child Care Trust to pass on to parents.

Mr. M. Lundy:

This was another reason why we located the Jersey Child Care Trust to The Bridge to give them, at the frontline, access to parents and obviously, part of their role is the welfare profile which they do each year. They have various day events where they try to raise their profile on the Island. They have a website. I think you can be directed to their website, if I am not wrong, from the States of Jersey website.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

You can.

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is the function of the Jersey Child Care Trust.

Deputy S. Pitman:

So it is solely their responsibility in providing information about nursery care provision. It is solely their role.

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is not solely their role. It is a primary role. Obviously the day care registration team will provide information if people request information from the department. In terms of the public sector, the schools themselves will provide information to the parents, the parents in the catchment area but a prime role, the reason for having the trust and, of course, we touched on this earlier on, it is about information to parents and there is the potential there to develop it into a more comprehensive children's information service.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It is part of the constitution of the trust; States providing information advice to all interested parties.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Are you satisfied that aim is being met by the J.C.C.T.?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

The J.C.C.T., as we said, we work closely with them and I have attended a number of open days they have had at Springfield Stadium and so on. They have literature out there. I believe they co-ordinate well with the departments, particularly Health and Employment and Social Security to ensure that people know about this. They have leaflets in different languages and so on. I believe they are doing a very good job in ensuring that ... and, of course, if you go into any Parish Hall, for example, you will find Jersey Child Care Trust leaflets in the leaflet thing, as I believe a former Parish Secretary might know very well.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

You are satisfied they are delivering.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I believe they are delivering in this area. As with everything, I am sure there is room for improvement as in every area.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Just to continue on the theme of working with parents, Mr. Lundy, in the previous hearing, you told us that: "I think the opportunity exists through this policy to create a stronger partnership which gives the parents the opportunity to influence the future strategy for early years." How will parents contribute to influencing this future strategy?

Mr. M. Lundy:

There are a number of things that could be explored and the first thing would be to give parents a voice on any strategic partnership. If you have the public and the private sector working together, well, okay;

you have the providers represented. It would be useful in developing a strategic partnership to have the stakeholders represented, so we would expect parents to form part of that group. In terms of developing quality assurance across both the private and the public sector, certainly in the public sector we have tried to engage parents in governance arrangements for schools and obviously exploring ideas at this point in time because this is an issue one would want to discuss as part of the partnership and hope the parents would take a strong view of, we would like to find ways to engage parents, not necessarily in the governance arrangements for the private sector providers because clearly they are their own businesses, but in assessing quality in the private sector, perhaps being able to work to a parent's framework, a parent's charter or something like that where they could comment on the quality of the private sector themselves. It would be a question of seeking ways to engage parents more meaningfully in a dialogue (a) about the structure of child care services and (b), a better quality of child care services.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

We discussed the public, private partnership. Who would lead that?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It is a partnership would be the thing. In a partnership, do you necessarily have to have a lead? The private sector could lead for certain areas. We could lead for others. I think to try to give, if you like, to put it in that way, your offer destroys the concept of a partnership. I see it very much as a partnership. We have had some full and frank discussions with the Jersey Early Years Association representing the providers and out of those discussions come hopefully a common way forward.

Mr. M. Lundy:

If what you mean is in terms of sharing the partnership ...

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

It is.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Then a number of recommendations would be made to the Minister. Obviously one of them is it could be led by the department. Another one, one that would probably be favoured by the Jersey Early Years Association would be for an independent share and these are some of the options that would come forward.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Sorry; chairing, quite different to leading in my view.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Yes. I think as you started to answer, I realised you had not quite grasped what I had not said. Coming to the end now; I know Deputy Gallichan has a couple more questions. Again on the theme of parents, I want to know how, and I think you may have answered this, Mr. Mundy, I was wondering how they are involved in developing these strategies but I think you have just given a comprehensive answer.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The parents were engaged in a ... when the Minister was first thinking about these ideas and discussing them and consulting with parents, a group was established which involved early years' providers but another group was also established which was the Parents' Action Group and the Minister consulted with the Parents' Action Group on the proposals in this strategy.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Do you know when that was?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Off the top of my head, I am afraid I cannot give you that date.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Would that have been formally minuted, so that you could tell us?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I do not think it would have formally minuted. I think it was a meeting that took place at the Town Hall in advance of this provision being presented to the States. It was a fairly general and open meeting to discuss some of the proposals to get the parents' views on it. Of course, the other way that parents have been consulted is there was an open public consultation on this, well, an opportunity at the time for parents to respond by email.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

As you know, we did a survey of parents' reaction to child years and so on, so it was another way of finding out their views.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I think this is probably my last question. Dr. Williams, a child psychologist, told us about 2 schools which have developed a nurture programme to support and promote development of vulnerable children. Is there any equivalent provision for nursery aged children and perhaps even younger children?

Mr. M. Lundy:

No, in the sense that obviously if there are children in the nursery classes who may have emotional difficulties or indeed, speech and language difficulties in some cases, there would be additional provision put into the school either in terms of advisory support, educational psychologist support and occasionally, additional resources in order to support those children. It is done on the basis of need.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Can I say that part of the training and the early years' curriculum in provision is for the workers in the school, the teachers and the assistant to try to identify very early any potential problems, so they can be looked at more closely and if necessary, the need and support can be provided. We think if we can identify it as early as possible, that is our ethos on this.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

You will be relieved to know that I think I am done with you.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

You will not be so pleased to know that I still have a few to ask you. I think this is a question with notice, Minister, because we would like to know how much, since the *Spat Report*, have the reports cost the department that you have produced.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Do you want us to try to itemise officer time on this?

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I think you should give consideration to officer time.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

My time is free of course.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

As is mine. I do not know in how much detail but I think a ballpark figure. It is something we have been asked.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I do not know how many hours ...

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I will leave that up to you to see what you come up with.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I do not know how many hours Mario has spent tossing and turning at home in bed thinking about it and whether we can categorise and value that. **[Laughter]** We have all tried ... do not blush.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I do not understand.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

No, Juliette, you are pure. No, it is difficult. We will try and do a guesstimate. We can certainly, where we have been charged and we have external consultants in, identify that. We will try to work on that.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think, to be fair, a lot of early research had to be done on this, so a significant amount of time was done to bring generally the department up to speed with the issues, although we have experts in terms of the advice provided to teachers et cetera, in the front line, but in terms of the strategy, a significant amount of time was invested in finding out what was happening in other jurisdictions.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

We appreciate that but it is something that has been addressed to your officers as a question. This is probably for Dr. Mountford. How are childminders regulated?

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is through day care registration.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

It comes under Dr. Mountford.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Finally, we are aware that the O.F.S.T.E.D. (Office for Standards in Education) reports on the standards of nurseries in the U.K. are made public. Has any consideration been given to making the reports produced by Dr. Mountford public?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

We do not. Sorry, general philosophy. We do not believe it is beneficial in a small Island to have league tables and comparative reports and that is a philosophy running through the whole of the department in schools.

Mr. M. Lundy:

We are in a position to report significant success in this area. We have experienced both systems. Inspection systems where there have been public reports; the current system we have at the moment, the system they have at the moment is not soft but it produces reflective and honest practitioners who are prepared to be critical about their own practice and they are also subject to external validation. If you set that against a context where O.F.S.T.E.D. reports are forcing people to hide their mistakes for fear of being blamed for them, then there is a very different emphasis. The emphasis there is accountability where the emphasis that we have put on this is about development. It is about getting better as opposed to simply saying: "This is how good we are."

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I think we were looking on the philosophy perhaps of publishing the O.F.S.T.E.D. reports as being one of openness and allowing parents to look at nurseries to decide ...

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I think one should learn from the U.K. and see what a disaster league tables are, in my opinion, in the U.K.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

To decide which nursery to send their children to. How do you think parents make judgments over here?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

In our sector, the public sector ...

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

No, in the private sector.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

In the private sector ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

Parents make judgments - I will not rate these in any way - on cost, on what they hear from other parents, on the experience they have had before, themselves, and there is an emphasis on ease of access. In the research we have done, we understand parents are not necessarily the best determiners of quality because those other factors that are around, what is in the best interests of the other aspects that are made can sometimes affect their judgments about what is real quality within that supervision. As the Minister says, we have tried not to publish the reports on the basis that it is not simply acceptable if you publish a report so that parents can say: "I do not want my child to go there any more. I want them to go

somewhere else” because that, in a sense, shirks the responsibility and the responsibility is to make this place, if it is not up to the standard, up to the standard that it should be.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Would it not also be fair to say that one of the major criteria that parents take, maybe it is what you are calling “ease of access”, is the fact that the amount of hours they need at the flexibility that they need to take them and allowing for a charging structure that may or may not allow them to take an hour by hour basis, I would think that is probably one of the most ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

Flexibility.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Flexibility, ease of access is, I think, one of the greatest determining factors in parental choice.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I think we have time for another 2 or 3 questions. I know Deputy Pitman has a couple.

Deputy S. Pitman:

Mr. Lundy, I think you are going to have to do some more tossing and turning in your bed for this question. I would like to know if you can possibly give some figure on the expenditure that has taken place with the building of ... since the policy was the Education Department building nursery provision on to primary schools.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Do you mean going back historically?

Deputy S. Pitman:

Yes.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Capital expenditure. The difficulty with that, of course, is whether you want to do it on pound parity today or whether you just want us to add up the figures because if we built a nursery class for £50,000 20 years ago, the equivalent today would be £250,000 for example.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

You must have someone in your department who can do ...

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes and quite prepared to do it. To be quite honest, as long as we are convinced this is good use of our officer's time and if you could convince me that there is any good use for this, I am quite happy to do it. I am not trying to be awkward but it would require, to bring those figures up to date, quite a lot of work done for the R.P.I. (Retail Price Index) from each time they were finished and so on.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

I am not clear myself what the question was but if decided we wanted to know what the cost would be at today's value, surely the simple fact is to ask how many classes you have and multiply it by ...

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Exactly.

Mr. M. Lundy:

What we could probably do for you is to provide you with an approximate cost putting a nursery class on to a school at today's prices.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes, we can do that easily. It does vary depending on the school and so on but there is an approximate cost per nursery class building and I do not know if you want to know as well, there is a cost for running it, the revenue cost which is teacher and assistant.

Deputy S. Pitman:

The purpose of the question is really looking at the whole strategy of 0 to 5 and in that strategy is going to be this nursery provision that started so many years ago with the attached nursery classes to the school, so that is where I am coming from.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think the estimate is somewhere in this but if we were to build nursery classes on to the remaining primary schools in order to be able to cater for all children, bearing in mind that would require 2 nursery classes in some schools, would be roundabout an additional £7 million cost.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes, circa £7 million capital cost and circa £1.4 million revenue cost.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Can I have one more quick question on the back of that? It is something that interests me and you may be able to give a very quick answer. When you have a school which has a 2 stream approach, I am

thinking of a newly built one like D'Auvergne, I understand has that, why was it not thought necessary to build 2 nursery units on that?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Because strangely enough, that was not the policy.

The Deputy of St. Mary:

Just to have one. I was just thinking it probably would have been cheaper for you to build 2 together.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Probably but we are bound by States policy and that is the way it was done and also, one of the things that happens with our schools, and we have had it in the past, is a school can be 3 form and go down to 2 form, it can be 2 form and go down to one, it can be one and for extending, it can up to 2 and they do change but that was the policy. You put a nursery class on each school.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

In the development of your strategy, have you spoken to the children themselves?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Not about this, no. I have spoken to the children themselves about what a nice flower they are painting and ...

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I mean you do not go to the nursery and ask them what them what they like about the nursery or if they are happy there or unhappy?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes. I am sorry, I thought you meant about the policy.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Absolutely and we have an advisor that does it every day for us in actual fact. The interaction between the department and I cannot speak for day care services, I am more familiar with the strategies that the early years' advisor uses in nursery classes. The early years' advisor is rarely at her desk in the department because she spends most of her time in the schools and is talking to children about their experiences and to the teachers for their experiences, so that is a very important part of her role.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes, I am sorry. I thought you meant consulting on proposals with the children. It might be quite

difficult.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

Deputy Pitman has had to leave but we have reached the end of our questions. We have done quite well in almost 3 hours I think. If I could just remind you that you said you would keep us informed on the developments as you progressed the 15 hour, we would be grateful for that and it may well be when we look at the transcript, we identify that we just do need some final clarification in which case, I think we will write to you for that, if we may.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes, no problem and I think we have a note of a couple of things you have asked us to look into.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I will get out officer to liaise with you.

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes, because we would like to be as accurate as possible.

Mr. M. Lundy:

You will provide me with the list of the operations in order to provide you.

Deputy D.W. Mezbourian:

I would like to thank you both for coming and draw this hearing to a close.