

STATES OF JERSEY



DRAFT ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2011 (P.99/2010): EIGHTH AMENDMENT (P.99/2010 Amd.(8)) – COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 10th September 2010
by the Council of Ministers**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The Council of Ministers opposes this amendment.

The Education, Sport and Culture and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel proposes that –

Part 1 the net revenue expenditure of the Education, Sport and Culture Department shall be decreased by £196,240 in relation to reducing all grants to private schools by 2%; and

Parts 2 & 3 the net revenue expenditure of the Education, Sport and Culture Department shall be increased by £121,000 and not proceed with the Comprehensive Spending Review proposal ESC-S3 (Restructuring the Special Educational Needs Service), ESC-S5 (cease annual payment to Durrell to allow free entry and teaching time for school parties); and reduce net revenue expenditure of Treasury and Resources by the same amount from Restructuring costs;

Part 4 the net revenue expenditure of the Home Affairs Department shall be increased by £100,000 and not proceed with the Comprehensive Spending Review proposal HA-S1(Removal of Discrimination Budget); and reduce net revenue expenditure of Treasury and Resources by the same amount from Restructuring costs.

Comment

Part 1

The current level of grant awarded to fee-paying schools is being reviewed as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review process and it would not be appropriate to reduce the support in an ad-hoc manner until the overall structure of primary and secondary education has been considered, and the impact of reducing the grant support properly considered.

It should be noted that whilst this amendment refers to private schools, the list of private schools includes Victoria College and Jersey College for Girls and associated primary schools, which are in fact States schools. Fees cannot be increased until the start of school year 2011, so the first 8 months of the year will have to be funded from within either the department's or the school's existing budget.

Financial implication

As this area is already under consideration, the effect of this amendment would be that the department would be required to deliver additional savings over and above the 2% target for 2011. This is considered unachievable in the short-term.

Parts 2 & 3

The post of Educational Psychologist has been submitted as part of the CSR savings. Across UK local authorities the ratio of pupils to Educational Psychologists ranges from approximately 2000:1 to 7500:1 with the lowest ratios occurring in local authorities serving more deprived populations. After the loss of this post the ratio in Jersey will be circa 3300:1 putting Jersey mid-range.

The loss of this post is achievable without impacting on the quality of core service provision. It has been possible to restructure the Special Educational Needs Service and the manner in which emotional support and behavioural support is delivered to pupils due to the structure of Professional Partnering with schools, reshaping the role of the Education Support Team and Educational Psychologists, and closer working arrangements with colleagues at Health and Social Services.

Ceasing central funding of the initiative which provides free access to Durrell and teaching support is part of the CSR savings. It is expected that individual schools, both fee paying and non-fee paying will continue to utilise the facility from within their own resources. Durrell will continue to work with schools to offer the range of learning opportunities required.

Part 4

The States resolved to implement Discrimination Legislation before the shortfall in States finances was known. The delay in funding does not prevent development of the Law and the first attribute from continuing. It is intended to progress the Law to lodging and debate later this year, following the original timetable, but its introduction will be dependent upon States future funding decisions.

There is likely to be a significant cost to the wider community and employers generally as a result of this legislation. So far as we are aware, this has yet to be considered by the States but would form part of the Report when the draft law is lodged for debate. Figures have yet to be ascertained but we would need to research relevant areas such as the cost to private enterprise in the UK as a result of the Discrimination Act, the number of tribunal cases, the running costs of tribunals and the cost of the awards made. There would also be a consequential cost to both the public and the private sector in having to change HR practices and the associated training that would be required for staff.

Financial implications

The total financial impact of this amendment on the Consolidated Fund is a decrease of £196,240 in 2011.

The majority of the amendment proposes that the financial implications are neutral and this is achieved by reducing the central provision for restructuring costs held by Treasury and Resources.

Members are referred to the Council of Ministers comment to P.99/2010 Amd. where the Council has explained in detail the implications of using this central provision for restructuring to offset funding increases.