

EQUALISATION OF WELFARE (P.164/2000): AMENDMENT

**Lodged au Greffe on 7th November 2000
by Senator C.G.P. Lakeman**



STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

180

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EQUALISATION OF WELFARE (P.164/2000): AMENDMENT

In paragraph (a) of the proposition, after the word Island insert the words to include provision for appropriate management and administration,

SENATOR C.G.P. LAKEMAN

REPORT

At a recent meeting involving eight St. Helier Deputies, one Senator (being a St. Helier ratepayer) and the Connétable of St. Helier, it was unanimously agreed that whilst those present fully supported the general principle of equalisation of the cost of providing welfare across the parishes, they could not support the proposition (P.164/2000) in its present form.

This proposition is in the name of Senator C.G.P. Lakeman, as Standing Orders do not allow propositions to be lodged in more than one individual's name. Senator Lakeman is acting as spokesman for members of the original group who met, namely -

Senator P.A. Bailhache
Mr. R.L. Le Brocq, Connétable of St. Helier
Deputy S.M. Baudains of St. Helier
Deputy A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier
Deputy J.B. Fox of St. Helier
Deputy J.J. Huet of St. Helier
Deputy T.J. Le Main of St. Helier
Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier
Deputy P.F.C. Ozouf of St. Helier
Deputy P. Routier of St. Helier

in addition to

Deputy J.-A. Bridge of St. Helier
Deputy J.L. Dorey of St. Helier

The reason for the above decision is related to the absence of any clear explanation or definition of the meaning of the words in paragraph (a) of the proposition - "the cost of providing welfare".

This proposition is largely based upon the conclusions of a study undertaken by Jurat P. Blampied and Mr. G. Grime in November 1999. This provided the Comité des Connétables with an estimate of the cost of native welfare for each parish in 1998/1000.

However, as Mr. Grime stated, in his letter dated 22nd November 1999, addressed to the chairman and members of the Comité des Connétables -

"the report seeks only to establish the cost of welfare paid to natives by each parish, and the cost of providing welfare accommodation by each parish for natives."

From the above, the conclusion can presumably be drawn that the majority of the Connétables have decided, despite representations made to the Comité des Connétables by the Parish of St. Helier, that the welfare costs to be equalised must relate solely to those funds paid out directly to native claimants as identified in the Blampied/Grime report, and should not include any element to reflect the unavoidable management or administration costs of those parishes who have the largest proportion by far of welfare claimants.

The view at the recent meeting of St. Helier political representatives was that that the above decision was not only undemocratic - it was also unfair to the ratepayers of parishes with a high welfare burden, who would once again bear the penalty for being the most populous parishes bearing the brunt of the Island's welfare burden.

The effect of this amendment therefore is to make abundantly clear that the cost of providing welfare services in any parish must include, in addition to the actual payments made to any native, an amount to reflect the true cost of providing the administrative and management of that process.

The difficulty of the proposition as it stands is that the process outlined attempts to provide an-all-embracing solution to provide for the requirements of twelve organisations - at least one of which differs markedly in size and complexity from all of the others.

If members agree to the amendment, it is suggested the next step should be to set up a Working Group to build on the conclusions of the Blampied/Grime report, and to establish clear guidelines identifying exactly what administration and management costs should be taken into account in establishing the true cost of welfare services provided by each parish. The Working Group could also usefully determine what level of provision should be made "for the appropriate management,

administration and audit” of the central fund, which is proposed in paragraph (b)(iii) of the proposition. It would also appear sensible to establish a common formula for these expenses for non-native welfare, currently funded by the Employment and Social Security Department.

It is further suggested that the Working Group should be set up under the auspices of the Policy and Resources Committee and be made up of individuals who have no vested interest in the outcome of the study, but who have a great deal of experience and knowledge of the workings of the parochial administration and system of government. This recommendation is made in the knowledge that a number of other agencies, including the Employment and Social Security Committee, are examining various matters to do with the Island’s welfare system - including a possible integrated system and centralisation of functions. However, it is considered that these matters do not fall within the scope of the abovementioned review.

Financial and manpower implications

This amendment has no direct financial or manpower implications for the States of Jersey.