

# STATES OF JERSEY

## Education & Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Quarterly Hearing

**FRIDAY, 28th SEPTEMBER 2012**

**Panel:**

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (Chairman)  
Connétable S.W. Pallett of St. Brelade  
Connétable M.P.S. Le Troquer of St. Martin

**Witnesses:**

Deputy P.J.D. Ryan of St. John (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture)  
Mr. M. Lundy (Director for Education, Sport and Culture)  
Ms. C. Walwyn (Assistant Finance Director, Education, Sport and Culture)

**In Attendance:**

Mr. M Haden (Scrutiny Officer)

[13:35]

**Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour:**

Welcome to the quarterly hearing of the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. If we can begin, we have quite a few questions which we would like to get through this afternoon so if I can launch in and start by asking whether the department is now aware how many students locally have been affected by the alleged downgrading of exam results.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think that the officers probably have the latest information but it varies across the different schools because it depends on which exam boards they are taking. You may or may not be aware that Wales have taken a different route to the United Kingdom in that they have regraded Welsh students that have taken the Welsh Board but they are not regrading English students, only Welsh students. A lot of our students have taken the Welsh Exam Board. We have asked the Welsh authorities if they would consider regrading Jersey students that have taken the Welsh Board. We have not got a definitive answer from them but we have explained that we are not part of the English system so we are a separate independent jurisdiction and we are hoping that they would consider regrading those from Jersey that took the Welsh

Board exams. We have not got the final answer but we are working on it daily. With the others, I think it varies across different schools. It also varies across when exactly in the year students took their exams because you can enter G.C.S.E.s (General Certificate of Secondary Education) at November, January and July. The majority of students go in July. Some of our schools locally took the exam in January and they were not, as I understand it, regraded. The boundaries were not shifted for those. It was only the July contingent. So, for example, Les Quennevais School took most of their English exams, as I understand it, in January so they were not affected. Some of the other schools were so it varies, but there are various initiatives going on in the U.K. (United Kingdom) with the other boards, not the Welsh Board but with other boards, and obviously we will be looking for any changes that were made to the boundaries. If they were reversed, we would be looking similarly for Jersey students to be reassessed as well. But apart from all of that, we are a separate jurisdiction so we can control access to A-levels ourselves in our own schools. We are, in fact, and have because we are already into the next education year so naturally we have to make sure that the right students get access to A-levels and we have been looking at and making our own decisions to give the right students access to A-levels as you would expect us to do, regardless of any boundary changes that took place.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Thank you for that context of the situation, but again if I can assert my original question, how many students have been affected by the downgrading?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I do not have those numbers in my head but perhaps the Director can.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We think there are around about 200 students. The reason I say “we think” is when they regrade, they do not re-mark. They reset the boundary and, of course, it depends where they reset the boundary so we can only make assumptions about the number of students that we think are affected. But certainly there are over 170 students who have taken subjects with the Welsh Board and it depends a lot on where they set the boundary as to how many of those students will be affected by it. They are mostly around the C/D range which, of course, affects the same schools in Jersey, mostly the 11 to 16 schools and to some extent De La Salle and Hautlieu. It is only 2 of the 11 to 16 schools who take the Welsh Board. What the Welsh Board have agreed to do is to consider whether or not they would be prepared to do for our

students what they have done for Welsh students, given that we are a Crown dependency. It does mean that if students do get a regraded G.C.S.E. that it will not carry the local Ofqual. It will simply be the Welsh Government local but we do not see that as too much of a problem for students.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Okay, thank you. That is a significant number, 170 lives, effectively. What impact has that had on the students themselves going on to other courses? The Minister did talk about what had been contemplated. If you could expand on that, I would be most grateful.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

As I say, because we do run our own separate jurisdiction here, we can control much more what we do independently of what happens in the United Kingdom so we would like to think that it has not affected any students particularly.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There will always be students who need to get a particular grade to get on a course and do not get the grade and, of course, the difficulty is in working out whether the student has been affected by the examination debacle in the U.K. or whether in actual fact the result has been affected by their own performance in the examination. We have not had too many cases brought to our attention where students have failed to get on the courses as a result of downgrading in the U.K. Where it has been brought to our attention, and it would be particularly in relation to Highlands and Hautlieu, the interim principal of Highlands Hautlieu has been able to look on those cases more sympathetically. I do not know the outcomes of them but we do know that there was an intention to look on those cases more sympathetically.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

You are saying not too many have been affected. Have you got a rough figure on them?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I cannot but we can collate that information for you. It is not necessarily information that would come through to the department because the organisations would manage it themselves, the institutions.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Certainly at a political level, I would hope that any debacles that happen in the U.K. in their exam system would not affect our students and we can ensure that it does not. We have the power in our own independent jurisdiction to make sure that it does not and I would intend that it does not.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Have you seen a rise in the number of students that have not been able to get their first choice universities, for example?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It would not affect them in university. It would only affect their access to A-levels in Highlands courses.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Could that change later when the G.C.S.E. certificate is worded differently?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I do not think it will, no, because access to university courses is based on A-level results.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Just can you confirm did this matter only affect the English G.C.S.E.s or were there any others?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We understand there are some other subjects affected but to a lesser degree. Schools have not brought other subjects to our attention but they suspect that one or 2 other subjects have been affected, and what schools normally do each year is they submit appeals. Where a young person has maybe missed the grade by a mark or 2, they would use the appeal. We do know that one school has appealed on their English results to the Edexcel Board, the English board, and none of the appeals have been granted. So the English boards are taking a firmer stance on this.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Okay, thank you. Then can I just ask what analysis has been made of the overall standard of achievement in the core subjects such as maths, English and science?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We are still looking at those results now and they are still subject to certain appeals. When is it finalised, Mario?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

What happens is we have the overall headline results. The subject analysis is done in the schools but the information that we take account of is the electronic information that is provided to us untouched, in other words by England, and that does not come through to us until I think around about the end of November. So when we get the verified electronic information from England, that is when we start to do the detailed analysis and that is in line with what happens in England because they do not put out the detailed analysis until around about January.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The reason for that is that there are a whole host of appeals on grades and re-markings completely separately from this global boundary problem in the U.K. So there are lots of detailed things and they do not get resolved until approximately half term in the autumn term so that is why we are waiting until November. We should have lots of information and all the schools will have all of that on their websites at that point in time.

[13:45]

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Okay, thank you.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

If the regrading is done, does that affect all the candidates, not just those who have appealed?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It will affect all of the candidates.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Does everybody go up?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We have not put in appeals for the Welsh Board because at this stage they have agreed to look at regrading but it will affect students who are so many marks from the grade boundaries.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Every grade?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, so it will be if the grade boundary moves up ... we assume it would not be moving up, it would be moving down, then it will affect every student who is within a mark or 2 of where that boundary was, yes.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Thank you. Moving on slightly, following up from the scrutiny report which was published last year looking at this area and this subject, can we ask what progress the department has made on contextualising things such as value added information which we believe was an accepted recommendation of that report?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Okay, where are we with value added? We started performance monitoring at a point in time partly as a result of that scrutiny report that you have mentioned. We will not get the first cohort of students through the whole of the system, including G.C.S.E.s, until December 2014. Now, that is the first time that we will have a complete range of data for a pupil going right through the system. It is at that point that we will start to have the most useful information on value added and from that point, from December 2014 onwards, we will be in a position to value add different schools right the way through the whole system. But in the meantime, we have agreed to publish as much as we can in value added and to look at the context of the schools and the results that are going on to the schools' websites for this year will include contextual information as far as we are able but the real step forward will come after 2014.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

There are many models to adopt when looking at the value added system. Can you advise what model has been adopted?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

As my director says, if you want to count how many days of the week there are, he can probably give you 7 different models of different ways of doing value added that are in operation around England and other places, but what we want to do is to develop one which is the most useful model in the Jersey context.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The model is based on the key stages that a young person goes through in education. So if they have been through nursery and foundation stage, there is a foundation stage profile that sets out what you would expect most children to be able to know and do at that stage. The next stage is key stage 1, middle primary school, and then key stage 2, the end of primary school. Key stage 3 is the end of year 9 in the secondary school and then key stage 4, the G.C.S.E. results. Now, we have come up with some broad expectations. Each of those key stages is measured in curriculum levels and what we are saying is that a child who is performing at an average level should be able to make 2 levels of progress through any key stage, so has that child achieved from key stage 1 right through to G.C.S.E. It is too easy, for example, to look at G.C.S.E. results, take a view about whether they are good or not but ignore what that child has been taught and learned in primary school. So this is about tracking a child's education right through from primary school through to secondary school and making a judgment about whether or not they have made the expected progress. That is in general terms what the system will do and, at the end of it, we should be able to make a judgment about whether the child has achieved as expected, above expected or, indeed, below expected. So we would be looking at schools in that same way and saying what percentage of children in this school performed as or above expected because that is a good indicator of whether the school is best meeting the educational needs of the child.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Just to clarify for my own understanding, then that particular model, is that unique to Jersey or how comparable would it be with other systems?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It would be unique in the way that we would use it. Key stage 2 and key stage 3 assessment is done in the U.K. at the moment and those results are analysed, the performance of schools monitored against those results. I think where we might be unique is about taking it down into that sort of very clear statement that parents and

the public would understand, which is around whatever percentage of children in this school have performed as or above expected. Now, I think that is a powerful statement because it could allow you - and we have not piloted it with real data as yet but the model is ready - to take, for example, a fee-paying school or a very selective high school and 11 to 16 school and start to compare because if you are looking at the cohorts in the school, the question is has the cohort in the 11 to 16 school performed as expected or above expected against the cohort in a more selective school. So you begin to get a picture of a comparison of 2 very different types of schools. So it is innovative in that but it is also slightly vulnerable in that we depend on Jersey curriculum levels and the Jersey curriculum which is very closely associated with the national curriculum in England. So if the Government completely changes the curriculum in England and does away with levelling and assessment, it leaves us vulnerable.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Thank you. Then finally on this section, Minister, what can you tell us from this year's G.C.S.E.s so far about the performance of Jersey schools?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Overall, I think we are performing at or above last year slightly, which is good news. There are, as you would expect, differences between different schools individually themselves. I do not really want to say too much at this stage. I would rather wait until November when we will have the final definitive post appeals data, so we are just slightly early.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Obviously, when we are confident that the results come through and they are robust, we do not have the detailed analysis for subjects. What we do generally know from what the schools have told us is that mathematics results this year seem to have gone up but the English results have gone down, which we would expect. Now, if that is the case, the likelihood is that our overall 5 A\*-Cs, including English and maths, will be affected. But I think the important thing to remember in Jersey, because you are not dealing with very, very, very large schools, is that sometimes a 10 per cent shift in a school in Jersey can be 10 children. So a 2 or 3 per cent shift in any one year is not of particular significance to us. It is the overall results that we would be keen to ensure are where they should be.



**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Just going back on the first questions that we had, is there a fee to appeal an exam result? Do you have to pay anybody, the board, to...

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There is a fee to appeal. There is not a fee this year for regrading. That is a separate thing altogether but the English Boards are not regrading. My understanding is that with most examination boards - but I will confirm this - there is a small fee to an appeal.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

That would be picked up by the parents or the school?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

In the past it has usually been picked up by the parents, yes.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Is that usually for a re-marking of an exam or...

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There would not be a broad appeal. A school would generally only recommend an appeal if a young person was 2 or 3 marks just under the grade boundary, so you would not open it up to everybody.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

But even that would be a specific subject as well?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, that is right, but I think there may be different practices obviously in terms of who pays for the appeals, but in general terms I think parents are asked to pay for them. Certainly, in the fee-paying schools that would probably be the case, but in the non-fee-paying schools we would generally expect to pick up the cost if we believe that there should be an appeal.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

It could be seen as a money-making venture by the Exam Board.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is but I would need to confirm the practice on that for you.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Okay. Well, just going on then to the G.C.S.E.s that we were interested in and their implication for the changes that ... I think it is 2015?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

2017 at the moment, we understand, yes.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

What was the question, sorry?

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

The implications of the proposed exam changes, how is it going to affect Jersey?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Are you talking about the English Baccalaureate?

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

The Gove proposals, yes.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Yes, going back to, if you like, G.C.S.E.s.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Okay. Well, I think the first thing to be said, as the Director has just explained to you, is that it is planned to commence in 2017. I think we should bear in mind that there will be a U.K. General Election before then. I think we should also bear in mind that the current Opposition in the U.K. has expressed concern about the changes. I do not know if they have said specifically that they would reverse that, but they have certainly intimated that they would delay it if they got back into power. So it is by no means certain that this is going to happen and anyway, at 2017, I think there is a lot of water to pass under the bridge before then on this particular area and it is too soon, therefore, for us to start making any kind of decisions or planning changes to follow what they might do. We have to wait and see so we are waiting and seeing at this point in time.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Nothing planned at the moment locally?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

What I think also should be said, and I have said it before, is that we are an independent jurisdiction. We do not necessarily have to follow it but we do have to bear in mind that at the end of the day our children want to access U.K. universities in the main and we cannot control those kinds of access criteria. So if there are curriculum changes that eventually do happen, then we would have to consider them quite carefully.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Was there a consultation with the Education Department?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

No.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Nothing?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes. There is no consultation with us on these issues. Obviously, we can go and be briefed on the issues but the consultation ... I am not sure how much consultation there was in England over these issues if I am honest. This has come directly from Government and the consultation really begins now. We, of course, could express an opinion and probably would express an opinion to the Exam Boards but the concept of the English Baccalaureate is really about which subjects you are going to include in it. It is not about a whole new examination. You might have these new G.C.S.E.s and the English Government might say: "Okay, we want English in there, we want maths in there, we want a science subject in there" and it could be that they are all academic subjects and they do not relate to what we are trying to achieve in Jersey, which is to get a good mix of vocational and academic subjects. So one option is to go with the English Baccalaureate. Another option might be to consider a Jersey Baccalaureate, which would be the same exams but you just determine which ones you place the greater value on, and a third option, if they are still around at the time, may be international G.C.S.E.s if they are still maintained, but it is too early. As

the Minister has indicated, it is too early really to plan for that change because there is really no certainty to the changes that are going to be implemented in the U.K.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think we have seen that both the devolved Welsh Parliament and Scottish Parliaments are not in synchronisation with the English perspective on this in any case. So, again, that is another reason for us to hang back and wait and see what happens.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

This will be private schools as well in Jersey hanging back, will it?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It will be, yes.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Yes, nobody is going ahead with anything?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

No.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Can I just ask then, from the type of information that you have been receiving so far, has there been anything in the kind of curriculum or the syllabus that would be in or is that again too early at this stage to know? What type of information has been fed through?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think it is all too early, Deputy, really for us to make too much comment. All that we are able to give you is pure conjecture at this point in time and I do not think we should really...

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

My question was about information flowing and whether anything has been fed to you.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We do get information flow on a regular basis but I think it is too early to take that information flow as a gospel at this point in time.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We received this information at the same time. We read about it in the paper with everybody else, literally.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We are not consulted as a generality.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Thank you. If you would like to...

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just one question. I know we have talked about G.C.S.E.s but obviously we have the A-level results as well since the last quarterly meeting. Obviously, the Minister has already congratulated students on their results, as the panel do as well, and obviously we congratulate the Minister and his department on the results that they have achieved. But just something I sort of touched on before: have the students been able to access all the courses that they have wanted and have they been able to get the courses that they have applied for without too much problem?

[14:00]

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We would not know that yet. Most of the students will be starting university around about now.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, we have not had any response; I am not aware of parents contacting us. I do not think the department has had much in the way of contact which would give us the kind of concerns on this matter, let us put it that way.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, it is difficult to know because the students will put down usually about 6 choices on the university form. We would not know if they did not get a first choice and were passed on to the next university, and that is usually the way it goes. If they get an

offer at one university and they make the grades, then they usually get into that university. If they get an offer but they do not make the grades, then they might get into their second choice university, but we would not have access to that data right now. We will be more secure around that when we get towards the end of October and the universities start literally to bill us for the student tuition fees. It is too early for us to say that yet.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

So you have not had a flood of complaints or anything like that?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

No, and we do not normally get a flood of complaints because the parents really are contracting and the students are contracting directly with the university, not through the department.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just starting off with one generalised question, what are the implications for schools in Highlands of the recently published interim report on digital schools in Jersey?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Immediately none except to say this, that we already have a growth bid in the Medium Term Financial Plan for an extra £3 million towards revamping the I.T. (information technology) and digital offering in the Island. We have started that even though we are slightly early in that we are still waiting for the results of the M.T.F.P. (Medium Term Financial Plan), but we have already started scoping out and what have you and it is likely that we will be focusing on the skills of teachers in the first instance. We would want to be involving the head teachers and the Skills Board as well as other stakeholders and also employers. So it is early days but we will be doing that body of work over the next short period of time after the M.T.F.P. money is agreed, hopefully, touch wood.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just to clarify on that, that is £1 million over each year of the 3-year period?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is a £3 million total budget, yes, at the moment, yes.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Obviously, you have had, as we have spoken about before, some extra curricula computer clubs.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We have had some pilot schemes, yes.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

How have you been building on that in terms of developing those?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It was a pilot scheme. It has been very well received and it is helping to inform our review that is currently in the process of kicking off and, as I say, already been scoped but the main body of work is still yet to be done. We have to make sure we have the budget first.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Can you tell me what timeline the department is working to on that particular piece of work?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

What is the timeline, Mario, sorry?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The starting point for it really was the skills survey, so the next thing for us to do now is obviously an analysis of how we can meet the challenges of that skills survey. But we have a lot of stakeholders we still need to consult with and that went to the students themselves, so we need to consult with heads, with teachers, with students, and I would expect that we would be in a position to start drafting something pretty much towards the end of this term, probably with a view to putting something out in the public domain towards the end of the spring term, so you are looking really at about Easter. There is usually a lag with I.C.T. (information and communication technology) because of the amount that you are spending. Because it becomes available on 1st January, it does not mean that you can start spending on 1st January. You need to put in place some fairly robust plans, particularly if it involves new hardware, new software, and new systems across the schools. But as the Minister has quite rightly said, the real challenge here is about developing the

computer science skills of some of our teachers because when we had our first I.C.T. strategy, every teacher was given a laptop to help them develop their skills. Many teachers do a very good job of teaching I.C.T. at the moment but they are not specialists. They are not computer science trained so we need to work out how we are going to be able to support teachers to deliver the curriculum.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think that is particularly relevant at the younger age groups. If you go further back into the timeline of a child's education, the younger they are, it is likely that the less specialist an I.C.T. kind of teacher you are likely to find. You are less likely to find one. But of course children are learning I.C.T. skills at an earlier and earlier age so that is kind of what we are finding, and one of the drivers for this new I.C.T. strategy is that young children now are ahead of their parents when it comes to I.C.T. skills. So I think that an element of this that we have not talked about is the question of the new curriculum for I.C.T. which will form part of the new skills strategy and the new I.C.T. strategy around it. We are already reviewing curriculum changes almost across the board in both primary and secondary areas. We have already talked about the English Baccalaureate, which again is a curriculum review of one variety or another, and this is really just a very important part of curriculum reviews and reconsiderations so that we are fit and ready with our teaching for the 21st century.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

You talk about discussing obviously with the stakeholders and obviously you mentioned headmasters specifically just then. With the digital debate they had at Grand Hotel I think it was, not so long ago, Grainville head teacher, John McGuinness, as reported in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)*: "called on his own experience as a head of specialist U.K I.T. school to argue for a greater role for businesses in the classrooms, 'I think it is a natural evolution to work with businesses in schools'." Is that one of the aims of the department to find out what business wants?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think that is absolutely right. I think John is absolutely right in his message. He is in tune with the way that the world is going. He would be in his position and I would agree with him. We do need to think about involving businesses more if we can.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**



But all funded by the States, not private ... because everyone there is...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

No, I think it is more that we have to involve businesses closer with curriculum reviews, with work placements and experiences, and this goes further than just curriculums in schools. This goes into our apprenticeship schemes, for example, when you get 16 plus. I think we need to involve companies in our, again, touch wood, in the M.T.F.P. There is money for developing the 14 to 16 vocational curriculum. Again, assuming that that is intact by the end of the M.T.F.P. debate, then one of the stakeholders we are going to be talking to is, of course, the industry and the potential new industries as well. We need to try and look at what is potentially on the menu as regards encouraging I.C.T. businesses to move to Jersey. Now, that is not strictly educational. We have other partners in that, specifically the Economic Development Department with their Innovation Fund. We need to bring them into discussions as well.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Obviously, we are, as I think you said before, very closely connected with the U.K. curriculum as well, but in terms of developing and training an I.T. workforce, will it be part of the department's remit to look at jurisdictions outside of the U.K. and see the sorts of things they are doing?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, we would tend to do that anyway. We have done that with our apprenticeship scheme and we would tend to do that as well with the I.C.T. I would think probably I.C.T. is a particular case in point because there is no doubt that the existing I.C.T. curriculum is very outdated and, again, I emphasised the point before, we are an independent jurisdiction. The I.C.T. curriculum is not one of the core English, maths, et cetera, that you would normally have that we have to make sure that we have the right kind of core skills being taught, but I.C.T. probably we may have a little bit more flexibility perhaps. It is one of the subjects that we could be a little bit more flexible with locally using our own independence.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

That is one of the comments that Dr. Moffatt made at that debate was that fact that we do not need to slavishly follow the U.K. We can be a bit more inventive ourselves when we are putting the curriculum together.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Absolutely, yes. Our review will be looking for what opportunities there might be there and again talking to our other partners in this, specifically Economic Development and, to some degree, Social Security as well. With the Skills Executive, we have both of those 2 Ministers on as well.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Looking at the way Economic Development are going and the pace at which they are going, do you think we can provide this type of skilled expertise in the sort of timeframe that Economic Development are looking to bring these industries into the Island?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I would hope so. I would hope we can move quickly.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Yes, 2 questions on that particular subject. Basically, what scope is there in the curriculum in order to deliver this type of education? I suppose I can also add on to that while it may be encouraged, it might be difficult for a student to want to do a subject without a qualification at the end of it. Has there been any thought into introducing a specific Jersey qualification if the department deems that the curriculum within which they want to teach is going to be different from what they might be able to have from an external Exam Board?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The existing curriculum is outdated, I have already said that, so if you are looking for a qualification at the end, unfortunately we are stuck with that at the moment as we stand, but this is a prime reason for looking at the I.C.T. strategy and the curriculum review of I.C.T. in particular to see if it is advisable and if it is the right thing to do to move to a slightly different or a radically different curriculum for that matter in order to develop these kinds of skill sets for our young people. We do have to, though ... it is just a note just to qualify a note of caution. Parents want to see qualifications at the end of a school life for their child and so does the child and sometimes often so do employers, so we do have to keep...

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

That is the critical one.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

... we do have to keep our feet on the ground on this one but I think we need to carefully consider how we can develop this whole strand of work to try to make I.C.T. teaching and courses and curriculum more in tune with what the I.C.T. industry wants and needs to develop.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

We very much talked about obviously younger people who were going to GC University level. Obviously, we have a lot of people unemployed at the present time. Have you thought about or what are you putting in place maybe to help those adults that maybe want to retrain in I.C.T.? What are you looking at in terms of that type of strategy, to get those people that may be sitting at home at the moment thinking how can I be involved in this?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think that will form part of the overall I.C.T. strategy. The whole area of retraining mature students is a different area slightly and there are other issues involved with that, but yes, it will form part of...

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Will that be part of the skills strategy presumably?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think it will be part of the skills strategy, yes. Specifically I cannot remember because I have not looked at it for about a month or so because it has been ... can you remember whether that is so specifically in the skills strategy, retraining of mature students?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There is currently...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We are carrying out a review in this, are we not? Yes, the Skills Board is carrying out a body of work at the moment on mature students and retraining and kind of whole life learning, and that would form part of it. I think that is where we are, is it not?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There are I.T. courses on offer at Highlands College currently. There is the foundation degree in I.T. at Highlands College, so there are opportunities for people to retrain. There are also opportunities for people to develop their basic I.C.T. skills as part of, for example, the Advance to Work and Advance post training. There are no proposals at the current time to expand that further, although we do know that some of the private providers are beginning to offer or to at least think about offering courses in I.T.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Can you tell us what way the curriculum is outdated at the moment?

[14:15]

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Sorry?

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

In what way is the curriculum outdated?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is aimed at usage rather than design. It is not designed particularly towards computer science so we need to develop the computer science software, higher level, lower level, whichever way you want to describe it, skills and higher skill levels on designing software, for example.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Although, Minister, would you not agree that there is a difference between what is taught in the G.C.S.E., which is more application use of programmes, as opposed to the A-level, which is more to do with the data programming?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

A-level is different. It is more at lower levels that the curriculum is wanting, shall we say.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The issue is that there are very few young people progressing from, for example, a G.C.S.E. in I.T. to A-level and even fewer going through to university. So the bigger worry this side of the world is that we will get left behind when it comes to creativity and innovation in technology. The drive in the U.K. is to stimulate a greater interest in I.T. in young people, and there is a gender issue - we have noticed this in Jersey as well - particularly to stimulate girls to take a greater interest in I.T. The curriculum as it stands could be construed as being quite dull but in actual fact it is flexible in some ways. If you are a trained I.T. teacher or a computer science teacher, you might be able to interpret the curriculum in a way that is particularly interesting to your students. But as I said, one of the biggest issues, not just here but in England as well, is that teachers over the last 15 to 20 years have taken an interest in I.T. and then become teachers of I.T. rather than being trained in coding and algorithms, et cetera, that form the basis of software development and there is a move to shift towards more of that.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Has there been any establishment of how much there are I.T. teachers wanting to sign up to be trained into this new programme to get those types of skills and whether there will be sufficient funding in order to provide that?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The funding for the strategy has been found for the next 3 years and as part of the consultation we would obviously want to be talking to teachers, the parent I.T. teachers and head teachers, to see what potential there is and what interest there is in retraining and development. But if you think of it from the perspective of a country like England, our teachers train there so it is likely that their biggest investment in this will be at the training of teachers as they go through university, P.G.C.E. (Postgraduate Certificate in Education), that they will be trained to come out as computer science teachers. We will benefit from that and then there is a question about what do you do to retrain teachers who are currently teaching the curriculum and may need to develop their skills further.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

But just at the moment the department is uncertain as to what the demand from the staff are to take up?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The first thing to do is to determine what it is that we want people to teach, so the curriculum is the first step. Then to do a skills analysis, a skills audit, to see whether we have teachers who can deliver the new curriculum and if there is a skills shortage, then to put in development and training to ensure that those people who have to deliver the curriculum have the skills to do it.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

That sounds like it might be quite a lengthy process.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is a lengthy process. It is likely to be a lengthy process. I do not see that there is a quick fix to this. I think there is a desire for a quick fix and, of course, if young people are going to the workshops after school and developing their skills and have an interest, then those young people may be able to come out and find apprenticeships in the local I.T. industry and so will be able to service the industry to that extent, and similarly with young people who are completing their A-levels. But if you are looking for highly skilled people to work in the I.T. industry, well, the likelihood is that they are not going to come out of the university system for at least the next 2 or 3 years and the partnership that we would want to have with business is to see how business can help us to train those young people now. Even if we have not got the skills in the schools, some of the companies can come in and work with us in the schools and help develop those skills.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

That sounds to me as if the partnership, the relationship between the businesses, is almost the key to this.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is critical, absolutely critical.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

But no target date set for just developing...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, there is a target date. We want to start out 14 to 16 vocational changes and start offering these wider opportunities to 14 to 16 year-olds in the 11 to 16 schools particularly from September 2013. That is the target date. That means that we have

to start making some decisions on these vocational offerings in the next 3 to 4 months because schools will need time to gear up and get their offers in place. So there is a timescale and that is kind of what it is. I think with I.C.T., although Mario was saying it will be a long process, I am concerned that we try to accelerate that process as far as possible, particularly with I.C.T.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The tentative date for the new curriculum introduction in the U.K. is September 2014. Obviously, we would be working on the projects that we have going at the moment. We will try and be well prepared for that but the essence of it is to know what you are teaching the young people. We can develop the skills in the workshops after school, et cetera, but if you make that an integral part of the curriculum and you take a year group - and in a year group in Jersey you are talking about 1,000 children - so if you are taking 1,000 young people or even 50 per cent, 500 young people, through a course that leads to no qualification, how many of those young people will secure a job? How many of those young people will you now have disadvantaged because you have brought them through a course, developed some skills, but have no qualifications with which to use for other jobs? So this has to be thought through thoroughly.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Those professionals that are university educated, you have already touched on it, only 16 per cent are women. How does the department see that they can change that attitude or try to get young female participants in those courses?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Role models.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think role models but I think you also have to make whatever skills are taught relevant to industry requirements and I think once you do that, you are going to get all sorts of people wanting to take part. So the key is to make them industry relevant at the end.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Given that you have outlined quite a lengthy process with a lot of things hinging on each other, what is the risk of slippage in this programme?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There is always a risk of slippage, Deputy, but it is our job to try to minimise that.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

How will you as Minister minimise that?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Constantly reviewing it and constantly worrying the life out of people like poor Mario to my left here on an ongoing basis.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think the slippage we cannot control, Minister, is the review of the curriculum in England. That really will define what we are going to teach in the schools and if it is ready for September 2014, then we have to be ready to teach it because the young people will not have access to the qualification otherwise. If it is not ready, then we would assume that we would continue with the existing qualification, although I very much doubt that that would be the case.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Thank you. We touched on it but if we can just move on to the skills strategy itself now. Are you able to tell us, Minister, when the strategy is going to be published?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The skills strategy is "owned" by the Skills Executive of which there are 2 other Ministers involved. It is on the Skills Board's and the Skills Executive's agenda. It has gone through our department and I think it is currently with either ... I am not sure whether it is with Social Security or Economic Development at the moment but it is pretty imminent and I think the next Skills Executive meeting should sign off the skills strategy would be my view. So when is the next meeting, Mario, off the top of your head?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Sorry, I do not know.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It will be before Christmas, I think.



**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

But what I can say is that a draft was recently received by the Skills Executive and there are just some changes to be made to the draft before it is final, just around style, and that is taking place at the moment. The Skills Board, of course, will handle that piece of work and then when it is completed they will present it to the Skills Executive, and then I understand it is going to be presented to the Council of Ministers and after that it will be published.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

You touched on some of the reasons; if you could just expand. Why has this publication been delayed? You talked about some stylistic reasons. What were the other reasons for its delay, given that it was such a big part of the Strategic Plan?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It has not essentially been delayed. The Skills Board have been working on this and it is a Skills Board generated piece of work on behalf of the Skills Executive. They undertook a fair amount of consultation before putting it together, but I am sorry I am not aware of what the target date was so I do not...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, I would not accept that it had been delayed in that respect that you are referring to. I just think that it is an important piece of work and the Skills Board want to get it right. I think there is also another point as well which is that there are things that have been developing over even the last 12 months that have been put into the skills strategy at the last minute and we have already been talking about one of them, which is I.C.T.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Although we do note that this particular strategy, along with the economic growth strategy, was supposed to come out at the same time as the Strategic Plan, which is why the panel is of the opinion that it has been delayed.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, I can understand that but, as I say, there are 3 partners in this. It is not just Education.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

How much would a strategy like that cost to produce?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Not a huge amount. It is part of the ongoing work stream of the Skills Board. It is core to their ... and they have funding separately, so I do not think it is huge money in terms of cost but there is obviously quite a lot of time that has gone into it.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

With States staff, not U.K., or both?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

No, there have been...

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The Skills Board is made up of local employers.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Local employers and with officer support from the Education Department.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Obviously, the economic growth strategy has some fairly impressive growth targets within that. Within this new skills strategy, can you give us any idea of how that is going to support that growth strategy, some of the objectives, some of the new initiatives that might be involved within that without giving the game away?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is not so much that I am going to give the game away or not. Skills are key to economic growth as a general statement. I think we all accept that right through the States. We have talked about I.C.T. There is a lot of impetus towards creating a fourth pillar of local industry in the I.C.T. area so the skills strategy is quite a generic document. It is not very specific. The draft that I have seen is not going to be going down to the kind of operational level. It is a strategy. It is not a tactical...

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Presumably it will be touching on issues such as a growth in vocational training, for example?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, it will be, and in the M.T.F.P. you can see from our growth bids that we are already implementing a number of things that are key to that skills strategy and economic growth strategy. We want to provide the right kinds of skill sets for our young people. We have initiatives in the Social Security area such as Advance Plus and Advance to Work which are working on the kinds of attitudinal changes that we generally feel are needed for some young people in order to be better placed in the workplace. We have the 14 to 16 medium-term initiatives to bring younger people that are going the vocational route, to bring them on earlier so that when they get to Highlands they will be that much further advanced and then will be better equipped to get into the workplace at maybe 18 or something like that. They will be on level 2 or 3 whereas they would have been on 1 or 2 as soon as they got to Highlands. So we are working on that, and the longer term strategy to create a younger workforce which is better prepared lies around the apprenticeship schemes that we are developing at high levels again.

[14:30]

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

So much of that skills strategy should revolve around many initiatives that are already or strategies that are currently ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, many of the things are, yes. A lot of those things like the vocational and the apprenticeship schemes and all those things, they were talked about in the Green Paper that we ran towards the end of last ... halfway through and towards the end of last year. They were talked about in that area. The normal procedure is to have a Green Paper followed by a White Paper and further consultation. In fact, we have not done that so there are a number of initiatives there that we have gone straight to policy with, such as vocational and apprenticeships. I give those 2 as an example but there are probably others as well. So we are not hanging around; we are getting on with the work. We do have and it is true to say that one of the frustrations that I think we have right now and was probably one of the consequences of the change to the Medium-Term Financial Plan is that you have a little bit of a ... stalemate is the wrong word. You have a little bit of a gap between when the M.T.F.P. and the growth bids were agreed before the summer recess but we do not have a debate until

November. That is one of the consequences of that long gestation period for this particular proposal is that you have your growth bids in the M.T.F.P. but it would be wrong to go too far ahead in going down that line because you are then making the assumption that the States are going to pass that M.T.F.P. as it is, and none of us want to do that. So although we can do a certain amount of planning - hopefully, fingers crossed, based on the growth bids that we put in the M.T.F.P. - we are limited. It does hold us back a bit.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

That leads on to another point. Do you see any issues or will there be any problems about funding for the skills strategy considering there is a bit of a lag between that and the actual debate on the M.T.F.P. and the formation of the M.T.F.P.?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I do not think there will. I would not want to place ... I mean, the skills strategy is an important piece of work because it documents what we all think about the way forward with skills. But it is a strategic document and I think a lot of the delays that we have, or some of the delays that we have, with the skills strategy are around the wordsmithing of it and everybody has to agree it. But a lot of the initiatives and, shall we say, the operational results of what we are all pretty much agreed is already in the skills strategy. What I am trying to say is they are already under way so there should not be any delay.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

The funding is there for it?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

As long as the States of Jersey pass the M.T.F.P. then, yes, the funding is there. There might be some other little areas around I.C.T. but we do have funding for that as well in very general terms, so I do not see any problems.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

If I can pose a question to you, given the time that it will take for publication of the I.T. specialist skills strategy, this presumably will be after the M.T.F.P. debate. How can you expect, Mr. Minister, States Members to make an informed decision on the spending proposals if they do not have the underlying documentation?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, we have scoped out, we have done enough work to scope out what we need to do in this review for I.C.T. We think that the right amount of funding is in there.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

How can other States Members make a decision on that matter if they do not have the underlying documentation?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

That is one of the problems with the process of the M.T.F.P.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

How, as Minister, have you tried to address that?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, I cannot. I have to get the funding. We have put in the growth bids that we feel we need, but we have to wait and make sure we have the money before we can steam ahead.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

So, effectively, you are hoping that Members will just pass the budget not really knowing what they are approving?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, I think the same thing applies to every department. I think that same kind of problem ... you have things like an innovation fund on the E.D. (Economic Development) side with growth bids. There is not a huge amount of information about exactly on that. There is work being done on it currently.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Minister, I think we could certainly give States Members a good business case for an I.C.T. strategy and the areas that the I.C.T. strategy will cover. It is unlikely that we are going to give them an I.C.T. strategy that is completed by then because we quite simply would not have completed the consultation. If we do not get the engagement of the people who are likely to be delivering this, it is not likely to be a success in the first place. So I think it is very important that States Members have a good idea

about why we need an I.C.T. strategy, the areas that it is going to cover, but alongside that the detail of the strategy will come later.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I mean, my worry would be, and do not get me wrong, I think £3 million is an awful lot of money ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Do not forget, it replaces some of the other money that we used to have because there was money in previous budgets for ongoing I.C.T. development mainly within the department, I have to say, things like hardware and software developments. So partly that £3 million is replacing some of that.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

But my worry would be, as I think we all know, that the I.C.T. strategy moving forward is a vital cog in driving the economy forward.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, absolutely.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

The worry would be that that £1 million a year is not going to be enough money to fund that. If it is not, what are we going to do? What can the department do to make sure that we develop something that is going to be fit for purpose?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, there are methods. There are ways of coming back to the States with scoping at a higher level if we feel that that is advisable, and it would be up to the States to approve or disapprove them. There are contingencies that the Minister for Treasury and Resources has, so if the States and the Council of Ministers as a whole were in agreement, then I suppose we could do that. We do not think that will be the case. From our initial scoping of the review, we think that we have sufficient funds, certainly for the first 3 years. It might change after that, but like these things are, as you would expect, these things will develop over a period of time. But we think we have enough for the first 3 years.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

So you see the first 3 years as more developing it rather than ...?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think inevitably that will be the case.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

I think you have some reservations, Minister.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

No, I do not have any reservations at all.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The money is coming in in the capital, say, of the M.T.F.P. because it is unlikely to be spent annually as it is being allocated because, quite simply, we are the biggest I.T. network in the Channel Islands, and that includes the finance industry. So you do not just go out there and replace all your hardware in a couple of weeks; it takes some significant planning. When you bring in new contractors, there is a lot of legal work to do with contracts, et cetera. It is a long, drawn-out process. It would be nice if we could just go in and buy the stuff, but you cannot do it that way and you have to have all the assurances and all the support contracts in place to ensure that the stuff works. Then, on the other hand, while our previous strategies have been built around I.T. platforms, the likelihood is that this strategy will be less dependent on any particular platform. It will be sort of platform-agnostic. It will require us to develop training around curriculum and things that are out of our control. So we are dependent on progress to a certain degree in the U.K. with the Department of Education and it would be a folly for us to go off in one direction only to find out that the curriculum in the U.K. did not necessarily go in that direction and left us investing, for example, in particular platforms that were of no real use to the local businesses or no real use to us in schools. So it is important to get this right.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

So much of that investment may actually be in the third year?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

In the past, usually the first year has been about planning and the latter 2 years have been about implementation. If it is hardware based, that is the way that it has usually taken place. But if it is more about training and development, then as soon as we

know ... if the U.K. intends to change the curriculum, what we do know is that they will put in place appropriate training and development for teachers and that we will be able to tap into it.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

The one thing I would like just to ensure is that we have - and we have mentioned it before - the flexibility to have something that is suitable for the industries that are here. I think that is something that I get the feeling from a lot of people is what we need.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There are 3 prongs to the I.C.T. strategy. The first prong in education is the use of I.C.T. to improve learning generally. The second prong is around ensuring that young people come out of schools able to use the platforms that they will meet, that they will encounter, when they go into business. The third prong, and the one that really all the discussion is around at the moment, is encouraging young people to develop the coding skills that will enable them to go out and make a more specific contribution to the economy. That is where the weakness is.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We talk about coding skills, but it is a little bit more than that as well. Coding skills, of course, are a huge part of it, but it is also around hardware development, pure high-level computer science. So it might be to do with the actual architecture of hardware and preparing the really bright young people to take a career in information technology which may well involve communications of all kinds and hardware, going on to university and going on to high-level businesses, high-tech businesses after that. If we can encourage those high-tech businesses to come and locate to Jersey, so much the better. Then we will be providing a whole route through into information technology in its widest form.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just on that as well, I am just making sure that we cover ... I think the third strand you say there is the one for me where that relationship with business needs to be developed.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Absolutely.



**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

It needs to be developed, I think, fairly quickly.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, and we have a partner there, clearly, in Economic Development.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

If we could move on to the sports strategy now.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Obviously, we have just had the Olympics. They were very successful for the U.K. How do you see the department encouraging more participation in sport, particularly at that highest level? We would all like to see an Olympian coming from Jersey. How do you think we are going to develop?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

One of the strands of work that we are in the process of developing is a new strategy for sport funding. That will include looking at all aspects of what we currently do with sport at the moment, including the development officers. Each part of what we do, development officers in the different sports, we are looking at that and we are going to go into consultation towards the end of the year and there will be a major consultation exercise in that. So I cannot give you the direct answer to your question now because that will be ... hopefully I will be in a position to do that maybe in the second quarter or so of next year when that is all concluded and we can make up our minds as to the right way forward.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

In terms of that sports strategy, you mentioned second quarter of next year. When do you see that strategy finally being put into place or ...?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Second quarter of next year.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

So when you go out to consultation, is that on a Green Paper?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

We will not get the White Paper until ...?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The White Paper will be second quarter of next year, I think.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Something that I think needs to be also stressed as well is the disabled side of sports as well and how we develop that. Again, can you give me some idea or how you ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

That will be looked at in part of that sports strategy as well.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

As part of the consultation process?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Given the deferral of the sports savings in the C.S.R. (Comprehensive Spending Review) until 2016, I believe, can you just explain with the new sports strategy how that is all going to fit together?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, I think we have to keep this in context. The sport savings that you are talking about are a relatively small part of the budget. Do not forget that net of income we still spend approaching £4 million a year supporting sport. Facilities, of course, is the biggest part of that, all of the sports facilities that we currently maintain and operate. The only sports cuts there were were in the area of travel grants specifically and, as you know, this year I reinstated the lion's share of that. In fact, only yesterday we have announced that we have brought forward funding from future years to assist the Island Games Association to travel to Bermuda, the sports men and women to travel to Bermuda. The Minister for Treasury and Resources has found another £30,000

for us and the Island Games Committee have found £20,000 themselves. So that adds £100,000 to the budget for the 2013 Island Games. Hopefully, that will encourage more of our sports men and women to travel to Bermuda and that in itself is very important because in 2015 we have our own Island Games hosted here. In 2015, therefore, our sports men and women will not need to travel, so that is why we have been able to bring forward funding to help them in 2013.

[14:45]

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I heard on the radio actually on the way here an interview with David Brookland, who is Treasurer or maybe President now of the J.F.A. (Jersey Football Association), saying that they will not reconsider going to the Island Games because one of the reasons was cost. Do you think that that is an opportunity missed?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

No, not really. I do not think that is the main reason, or certainly should not be the reason now, because there is another £100,000 available, generally speaking. That will or has the potential to reduce the travel costs to Bermuda to getting towards the normal travel costs that happen every 2 years when the Island Games takes place. No, I think that the Football Association decided not to take part because they want to spend their own funds in different ways, travelling to the U.K. for competition there which they feel would be at a higher level. I think it is true to say that a number of the other participating islands in the Island Games are not sending football teams to Bermuda. We obviously do not have any control over that in Jersey, but that would mean that there would be not a high level of competition in Bermuda potentially. I think that is a contributory reason for the Jersey Football Association not wanting to travel.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

With the £100,000, where will that go to?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It will not be up to us. It will go to the Island Games Association and they will decide how to spend it. It is specifically for travel, assisting sports men and women with travelling.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

That reprioritised sports funding, that £50,000 grant, where has that money come from?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Okay, reprioritisation is a slight misnomer in its wording. It is actually retiming because when my predecessor cut some funding for travel grants, it was - and I think this is already in the public domain - because he felt there was some concern about how some of that money was spent, and I kind of concur with that. Nevertheless, I have reinstated the lion's share of that, but specifically at that time I made it clear that this did not include the Island Games funding. Every year we fund Island Games travel costs to the tune of about £20,000. Well, it is £20,000 every year. So we planned to allocate the £20,000 to the Island Games this year, which they have already had. Next year, 2013, 2014, 2015, et cetera. So what we have been able to do with the help of the Minister for Treasury and Resources and the blessing of the Treasury is bring forward that funding into 2013.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

What effect might that have longer term, though?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, they do not need to travel in 2015.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

That is fairly obvious.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

So it will not have any effect long term.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Presumably that funding may have been used for other purposes, might it?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, we have separate funds allocated for the 2015 Island Games in Jersey, so it should not affect it. I do not think it will have any long-term effect.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

So you do not think there is going to be knock-on effect?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

No. I am a very keen supporter of the Island Games. I think all Ministers for Education, Sport and Culture have been in the past and will be in the future. I think it is key to what we do. It is something that our sports men and women always aspire to try and represent their Island at the Island Games, so I am very supportive and I know generally politically the Chief Minister is and the Council of Ministers are. So I do not think it will affect the Island Games in the future.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Just talking about the advisory grants, where do the advisory grants come from?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The sports advisory grants?

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Yes.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Now, the Sports Advisory Council, this is the grant funding that was cut initially by my predecessor and then reinstated by me earlier on in the year. It is specifically mainly to assist local people to travel off-Island to participate in sport. There are a few other things that it does as well as travel grants, but in the main it is travel grants.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

I mean, we have had the list ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

You have had the list so you can see what the list ... sorry?

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Kennel club?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, I think that was one of the concerns that Deputy Reid had and which I concur with. There are some concerns about the way that that money was ... this comes

from the period in time when the department was responsible for sport and leisure. So this is an old policy that was in place to support leisure activity. One of the things that we will going out to consultation with is to ask the public whether they still feel that it is appropriate to fund leisure activity. That is one of the strands that would be, for example, in the Green Paper.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

In terms of the money that was granted, is that decisions that were made by the Sports Advisory Council, not the department itself?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We do not make that decision, no. The Sports Advisory ...

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

They get the money, they decide?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, they get an annual grant and they decide how to spend it. I mean, obviously there are criteria in place, but they are fairly wide. Again, that is one of the things that our new sports strategy and funding strategy will look into is perhaps, once we have had our consultation, to put some kinds of guidelines in place that will give a better guide to the Sports Advisory Council if, in fact, that is the process that we continue to follow.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I know there has been comment made about the rugby club in terms of the £75,000 they got and the money they got from Education, Sport and Culture. I have to personally say I totally support ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Not from Education, Sport and Culture, from Economic Development.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Yes, there was another amount given as well, was there not?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Traditionally, Education, Sport and Culture have rugby development officers, so there is money spent there. I cannot remember the exact nature, but for many years we have supported local rugby in the same way as we have local football and archery and table tennis and various other things.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Was that a figure of about £35,000?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I cannot remember the exact number. I think you have it in your list there, do you not?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Yes, it is actually on this one here, the £35,000. I think there was another £15,000 given in terms of equipment as well.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

£15,000 is usually contributed towards the development officer and then the national body makes up the cost. Each of the development officers in each ward costs around about that amount of money, so it is very good value in terms of what we get back from it because the sports development officers not only work for the sports clubs but also work throughout our schools.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I merely asked the question because I think people might look at it and be critical again of the rugby club. I just want to be clear where the money goes to.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

That is not new money. That is not this year's initiative. That is annual funding for rugby alongside athletics, swimming and all of the others that get funded in one way or another part of that £4 million net budget after income, which I think needs to be said. We do put a lot of money behind sports. Some people get the idea that because of the history of this that I might not have my heart in sport, and I just want to assure the public that that is just so far from the truth. It could not be further from the truth. I have been involved in sport myself at quite high levels all my life, at a professional level in the U.K., and so to say that I do not have the kind of pride and

passion for sport that a Minister for Education, Sport and Culture, you know, it has been said, is just completely wrong.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

You mention that passion. Just one small point. I presume that you would fight tooth and nail irrespective of what happens at Harbours and Airports to keep the airport playing fields in Education and Sport?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think we probably would, yes.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you. As the Constable of St. Brelade, I am glad to hear it.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Okay.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

The Constable of St. Martin has an interest, too, in fields. **[Laughter]** In 2012 the sum of £315,000 was added to the budget as a one-off pending the lottery funding. Now, we know the lottery funding did not work as expected. How is that going to change the asset renewal?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

This was an area of exposure on our budget that we were well aware of from an early point in time, so much so that we have had discussions at the Council of Ministers level as to what might happen if the lottery funding did not become available. We received assurances, and they are certainly minuted in the Council of Ministers, that should that be the case we will get funding from ... we have that from the Minister for Treasury and Resources and the Treasurer herself. So I am relaxed that the money will be found in one way or another if that does not happen.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

I did not realise the Treasurer was making a personal donation to this matter. So you can guarantee that the funds will not be coming from within the education budget?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**



Guarantee is a very strong word, but I have it ... let us put it this way, it has been very high on my agenda to establish the ground rules should that lottery funding not become available and I had very strong reassurances from the Minister for Treasury and Resources and the Treasurer and the Chief Minister minuted in the Council of Ministers that it will come from the Treasury, not from the education budget.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Are you able to tell us what proportion Jersey Heritage did get from the lottery or is that yet to be decided?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think that is yet to be decided.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Any other questions?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Not on that one, no.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

We might just go to Highlands College now.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Okay, yes. Can we ask what the current number of students enrolled at the college is at the moment?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is about 1,000, I think.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Has it been able to adapt to those increased numbers?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, we have a budget for that. Again, it is subject to M.T.F.P. still, but we are accommodating about 1,000 students at the moment. Obviously, we have a new interim Chief Executive with responsibility for Highlands as well as Hautlieu just

started in September, so I have no doubt that those kinds of issues will be covered in her reports back to us and I am expecting the first of those meetings early ...

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There is a meeting before half term.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

So the numbers have increased yearly?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We are coping with it.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

But they have gone up every year at Highlands?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We planned on about 1,000 and that is what has materialised, so our planning was pretty accurate.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We will have full confirmation of the numbers within the next few weeks. Sometimes, well, often actually, at the beginning of each term you get people who enrol in courses and then they may drop out or they may change courses, so usually the numbers that we get about mid October are pretty solid, robust numbers that it will be around about that for the rest of the year.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Do you manage to get any figures in terms of those that can gain employment as they leave Highlands or those that maybe have to take another course? Do you get any figures from those?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We have not got confirmation of those numbers yet and we would not ... but it is true that some people come for a one-year course and then they decide to stay on and take it to a higher level, which at any time is perceived to be a good thing because obviously then they are going to come out into the world of work with a higher level of skills. But the exact numbers we will not know that just yet.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think there are some very encouraging recent statistics coming out from the Advanced to Work which is run by Social Security now. I cannot give you the exact numbers. I am not sure even if they are in the public domain yet or if they are about to be in the public domain, but certainly they are doing some very good work in the Advance to Work area. That would indicate that more of our students ... I think the skill levels and the readiness and preparedness to go into the workplace is a slow but steady improvement and we will continue to work at that. I think it is extremely important.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

So the students at Highlands, are they local students?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Not people coming to the Island and using ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We do not have any specific information that would lead us to think that.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Students are entitled to free ...

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

If someone is living in the Island they can apply, yes.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

But we would expect students that are post 19 years of age that either the employer would be paying for a course that the employer wants them on that course, or the students themselves would pay for the course or make a contribution to the course. What we are talking about here are students really post 16 and any student who wants to continue on in compulsory education to the age of 18 can do it free of charge if they have the right to be resident in the Island.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

So the more students that study at Highlands, there is more people coming out at the end. Are they finding work? They might be better educated or have a greater ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, that depends on how many jobs are available, of course. Are the jobs available? They are certainly better prepared for the world of work without any question and we will continue to work away over a period of time. I do not think that kind of work will ever end, actually. It is a constantly moving feast. But the separate question as to whether the jobs are available is another matter. That is to do with Economic Development. That is to do with all sorts of things. It is to do with whether there are ... the level of inward migration has an impact upon that. All sorts of things have an impact upon the amount of jobs that are available. All we can do is prepare our young people to the best of our ability and to the best of their ability to be ready to take whatever jobs there are that are available and to continue to increase their skill level so that we, in fact, develop industries in that way.

[15:00]

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

I think you are right. They are coming out with a lot more qualifications, a lot more belief in themselves.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Absolutely.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

But are we not hiding the fact that we are actually providing that education for 1,000 people who suddenly are going to ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, a lot of other countries, of course, are making it mandatory for young people to stay in education or training, I think, until the age of 18. That is coming in in the U.K. in 2014.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is actually being phased in at the moment, yes.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Is it being phased in at the moment? There was a question and it was one of the questions in the Green Paper as to whether we should consider that. The general consensus was no, we do not need to, and that is probably borne out by the figures because on a voluntary basis we have something like 95 per cent of all school leavers are staying on either in work, education or tertiary training at Highlands. So without having to make it statutory, our 16 to 18 year-olds, 95 per cent of them are staying on.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

The 1,000, is that 1,000 at Highlands or does that include places like Trinity Horticultural Centre and other outside ...?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I am not sure.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The number is circa 1,000. We would have to confirm the numbers with you, but that would include all students who are registered with Highlands College. So if they are working off at another base but are registered students at Highlands College then it would include them.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

In terms of the courses that are being offered, do you have any indication of the courses that are the most popular or maybe those that are over-subscribed? Do you have any feel as to whether students are looking in different directions?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think it is still early days. As Mario said, there are new people. We will not have the final numbers for another 3 weeks yet, but I think certainly that is one of the things that Highlands will report back to us imminently.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There are certain subjects that are always popular. Construction is always popular. Some of those subjects are restricted by, constrained by, the size of the workshops, et cetera. But then there are some of the courses that we run which people - for

example, hair and beauty - might assume that you are turning too many people out into the hair and beauty industry, but in actual fact hair and beauty is simply a vehicle because you are developing skills in that area but you are also developing the softer skills and the more generic skills: customer service, the right attitudes, et cetera. So sometimes for young people of that age it is not just about the course that they are doing. It does not necessarily mean they are going to come out and do exactly what they did on the course, but they hopefully will come out and be able to transfer those skills that they learned on the course into whatever form of employment they apply for.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I do worry about hair and beauty sometimes because ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, let us not worry about hair and beauty ...

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Well, I do not have any. [Laughter]

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, beauty, yes, hair, no. One of our most successful online businesses developing is in the area of hair and beauty. You know who that is; if you do not, I will tell you. It is Feel Unique and they are doing extraordinarily well. A lot of our students are training in the right areas, so let us not knock hair and beauty.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just moving on to procurement savings, there is just over £700,000 planned for 2013. Could you just clarify how you will be reaching those savings or attempting to?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There are certain ... a significant proportion has been energy savings.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Will the lights at Victoria College be turned off at night much to the joy of the Constable of St. John, I am sure?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

They should be, certainly. I think for the kind of detail in that, Christine, I do not know if you have that in more detail.

**Assistant Finance Director:**

Yes. Do you want me to answer this one?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Please.

**Assistant Finance Director:**

The procurement savings, we will be working with the Treasury and the Procurement Department to fulfil them. They have identified areas where they can see benefits of taking a corporate approach and getting better prices for the States. So in the area of energy we are certainly working with them and with Jersey Property Holdings, who manage all our buildings, looking at a series of replacing our lights with L.E.D. (light emitting diode) lights and low energy things. There are a lot of energy initiatives and again we are looking with Eco-Active as a department to work together to actually positively try and reduce our energy use and, therefore, yield the savings there. The other key savings is the insurance. We have a States insurance contract which all the departments contribute to, so again they have led on a negotiation of prices for those. So it is us working with Treasury to yield those savings. They are the 2 biggest areas.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

In terms of supplying schools with the correct amount of equipment, stationery, things like that, you are convinced that schools are not short of equipment, that procurement savings are not being made by purely not providing them with adequate supplies? That is a comment that has been made to me on a couple of occasions.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We do not provide the schools with equipment per se. We provide the schools with their budget. That is based on a formula and it tries to distribute the funds that we have equitably, but of course some schools get a little bit more than others because they might have bigger premises or they may have children with special needs or something like that. But the fundamental formula tries to distribute money evenly across the schools. It is then for the schools to determine how to use it and we would, of course, support the schools in that but we would also challenge them in

that. So a school could choose to invest its money in additional staffing, for example, to support a particular area at the expense of something else. Those are decisions that need to be made on the ground.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

How do you monitor those decisions?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, the monitoring in terms of the actual expenditure is done with the department and the department's finance team. Christine and her team will provide support to the schools in setting their budget and will help them monitor their budget throughout the year to ensure that there are no major peaks and troughs. In terms of what they are actually spending the budget on, well, the professional partnering scheme that we have developed is challenging schools to show that they are achieving the right outcomes. For example, if we were talking to a school about the performance of a group of children, for example, with special needs, we might then be saying: "Right, how are you using your special needs budget? How are you investing in these children?" So those are the types of conversations that would happen through the professional partnering. So there are 2 layers, essentially, of monitoring.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Is there an opportunity for staff to give feedback to the department if they do not think something is quite right? Sorry, am I beating you to this?

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Yes.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

They do that all the time, as you would expect. These are all highly intelligent and very caring people that run our schools, so if you think they are going to keep quiet when they have Mario's ear, you would be wrong. They certainly do give us feedback in various ways.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I think, and I say this with the greatest respect having been a secondary head teacher, I have yet to meet a head teacher who has actually said they have enough money in the school.



**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

That goes without saying, yes.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Just part of that feedback loop, does the department proactively go and contact the unions to ask if the staff feel that they are properly resourced?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We have a meeting with the unions on a very regular basis. I chair it, Mario assists me, and we have a good, honest and frank discussion with the unions once a quarter.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, and this is not an issue that ... it has come up on the agenda in relation to the C.S.R. and the impact on the service, but we have not had agenda items relating to any specific schools. But each school has its own union representatives in the school, so we would expect that if teachers in a school have concerns about it that they would talk to the head teacher about it.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Thank you. If we can just move on to the property portfolio, the department we believe and understand has been reviewing their property portfolio and we would like to be updated on the status of that.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, we have had the report and there are a number of things going on with property specifically around provisions of new schools.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Would we be able to have a copy of that report?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I am sure you could. It is in the public domain now, I think?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is. We can certainly make it available.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes. As you know, there are a number of potential new schools, not least of which is the potential need for a brand new primary school in the town area for 2015-2016, about that kind of time span or even sooner. No, 2015 I think is the target date for the new primary school because that is the point in time where we know that we are going to need one because of the data that we have on new births and inward migration and all of the other things. Principally, the pressure is going to be in St. Helier so that is why we need to build a new primary school in St. Helier. So that is part of that property plan and there are several others. Les Quennevais, the question of a new prep school; Victoria College Prep, a new school or a refurbishment of the existing prep school; and there are others.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Specifically, can you tell us what the outcome with regard to the d'Hautree site is given that there was a possible trade-off to the housing?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is. The question of d'Hautree is in that property plan, but I think any decisions relating to the future of that site will depend upon what comes out of the reports that we get from the new interim head of Highlands and Hautlieu and how we end up delivering the new 14 to 16 vocational training, which will involve all of the 11 to 16 schools as well as Highlands and even, dare I say it, the I.C.T. strategy could have an impact on it. We are not sure but we want to make sure that we have all of this information in front of us to map out the future before we make a final decision on whether d'Hautree should be handed over to the Housing Department or someone else.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Who maintains the portfolio of education buildings? Is it yourself or is it ...?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Property Holdings.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Property Holdings.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Have Property Holdings contacted you about the possible site for Gorey? I mean, because there are current plans ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

The Potteries?

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

No, Gorey behind the Dolphin Moorings site that they are currently applying for 3 houses.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

You mean the impact on demographics in the area and the potential impact on Grainville School?

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

No, no ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We have had some discussions.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

No, not for the education part but for the culture part as a museum or heritage centre.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

That is not on my radar but it is now because you have just mentioned it, so I will ask ...

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Well, it seems to be creating a little bit of interest at the moment in the parish.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Thank you. That is the kind of questions that I will ask, but I am not aware of it at the moment.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you could update us given the vast amount of consultation which happened with the possible Green Paper, possible discussion paper - depending on your perspective - of the last paper that was submitted by your department. Presumably now the responses have been collated and that is ready, so when will that be published?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I do not have a date for you but I can tell you that the paper is very close to the point where I will be releasing it. There are a few detail changes that I need to make around it. We are very close to that. If you are asking me for a specific date today, I cannot give you one.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Are you talking about the publication of the new White Paper from Education?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, there will not ...

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

I am just talking about the consultation responses from ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes, the consultation responses have been collated and are very close to being able to be put in the public domain. In fact, I had a meeting about a week ago and it is on my agenda for next week to get to the point where we can release that collation of responses to that Green Paper consultation exercise. So we are within ... I will not say days but certainly within weeks rather than months of it. Close. I hope that is okay but I do not want to give you a specific date because I do not have one right now, but it is close.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Something on a different point, unless you have anything else?

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

No.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just regarding something that we mentioned in a previous hearing, contingency reserve to cover teacher absence and the potential cost of providing insurance cover, which I know they do in the U.K.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Yes.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Have you progressed anywhere on that?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We have looked at it in some detail, but we have come to the conclusion that it would be counterproductive. It would cost us more money, and the reason for that ... well, there are several reasons. One of them is that, as you can imagine, an insurer is in it for profit, so he will add a premium to whatever ... will add a profit margin on top of any premiums that he thinks it is going to cost us. It also becomes less flexible and also normally it would be based upon personal injury or personal sickness insurance that a teacher would have. Typically, that money, when a claim is made, it would be used to pay for another teacher to cover.

[15:15]

The problem is that usually the first 2 or 3 days is excluded from that. Now, we have to provide teacher cover immediately that a teacher does not show up for work, pretty much, so there would be a funding gap there. As I said, it just would not be commercial.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

In terms of teacher absence, do you have figures for Jersey that maybe compare with the U.K. in terms of numbers and times?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

I am sure the department does, but I do not have them to hand.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is not as easy to compare with the U.K. We certainly have figures that compare with other States departments. The difficulty with the U.K. is that it does not have the

same local authority relationship with its schools. The governing bodies are the employers. Effectively, each school in the U.K. is its own business so it is more difficult to create overall statistics. There is an annual report that comes out, Statistics in Education, that we tap into. The data that it collects each year is pretty consistent so we could look at that, but I am not sure that it actually has absence stats in it. What we do know is that our absence figures are quite low.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

There is one other point which I think is relevant. I do not know when the last time was that you filled in an insurance claim form or went through the pain of making an insurance claim.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just done one, funnily enough, and it is painful.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, you will know that it is painful and there is an administration cost to that. I think we are reluctant to put that kind of extra administration cost on head teachers because then for what purpose?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

We are effectively the insurer and we do it without a premium.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

You think that is the most effective way ...

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is for a jurisdiction this size. That is where schools might club together in a federation in England, or if you have an insurance company that is working across schools rights across the country and specialising in that type of work, there might be economies of scale. But it would not really be cost effective, we do not think, for an insurance company to take that on for the number of schools that we have. Our initial investigations into this suggest that we cross this one out.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just from the point of view of something that I am probably a little bit ignorant of, in terms of teacher cover for teacher absence in secondary schools, for example, would that be covered within the school or across all the secondary schools?

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It is covered within the school for the first couple of days and then after that we usually bring in a supply teacher. We maintain a pool of teachers who are not full-time teachers but are available to come in and do some part-time work. We usually then call in a supply teacher.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Final questions?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I have one. Fort Regent was in the headlines in terms of developing a possible university.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

He has taken my question. **[Laughter]** Go on.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

You can have one of mine after. Is that something that you have ever thought of as a feasible project or do you still have other thoughts about where Fort Regent might go in the foreseeable future?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Is this a question about Fort Regent specifically or about a university of Jersey?

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Both.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Well, a bit of both really.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, Fort Regent itself is very firmly within the realm of Property Holdings. They are leading the Fort Regent policy group. My Assistant Minister, Roy Le Hérissier, sits

on that. I think they are thinking about it in general and still progressing it, so I cannot really give you much more on that. Specifically on universities, I am keen to develop whatever opportunities there might be for providing university courses locally. I think it is a good thing and I am looking for whatever opportunities there are. But the people that were talking about using Fort Regent and what have you are at one end of the scale of ... you know, their scheme is quite, shall we say, optimistic and is quite far-reaching in its suggestions. Through the Skills Executive we have asked Michael Goldstein to review again his 2005 report on the possibilities of a university for Jersey. Again, that is going to come to the Skills Executive again at the next meeting, but we have seen a preliminary paper. There is a bit more work to be done, which they are doing now, but that is more towards developing a partnership with the existing suppliers of university-level higher education courses locally. I am talking about BPP. I am talking about the International Business School. I am talking about the law school locally and also the University of Plymouth that provides courses at Highlands currently. So it is more of a development of what we already have that we are looking at rather than a big, grandiose scheme. I think it is important that we do not lose what we have. I think there is one further point and that is that we have to keep our eyes on the ball and our feet on the ground when it comes to what the demand is for higher education courses among our students that pass their A levels. I would suggest that it is still seen to be a good thing for our local students to go away and off Island for university courses and get more experience and a wider view of life. We have to bear that in mind when we are thinking about university opportunities in Jersey.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I just have one small supplementary and that will be me. Obviously, the sort of figures that we use in terms of putting a feasibility study together seem to me to be quite a lot of money. I think it was about £100,000 they were talking about. My question would be has there been any encouragement from the department because there seems to be an awful lot of money ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

They have asked us for that kind of money and I am afraid we have had to say that we do not have that kind of money in our budgets at the moment.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**



No, it was much the same question I was going to say. Assuming that the students would be coming in from the U.K. or from outside the Island or ... because we have Highlands. I know they are not all university degrees at Highlands but there is only so many ...

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, if we are going to talk about this in very general terms, there are all sorts of things that we would need to examine, talk about, have resolved politically, before we could entertain that kind of higher education tourism, effectively. We would need to think about the question of housing all of those students. We would need to think about the inward migration aspects of it all. We would need to think about policing of students locally. If you had a large university campus, for example, at Fort Regent, there is policing implications, all sorts of implications that we need to think through very carefully. So there would need to be a ... who knows, if we do develop university offerings locally through bringing all of our local suppliers into a kind of consolidated offering, then it might develop over a period of time, but I think all of these things have to be thought about very carefully. There are much wider implications than just providing higher education opportunity.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

When did the department first become aware of the possibility or the interest for a university?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Well, it has been going on for some time because we had a report, as I say, by Michael Goldstein in 2005. At that time it was felt that we should continue with Highlands developing what at that time were felt to be fairly limited opportunities. It may be that as university costs rise in the U.K. that that kind of demand is starting to get a bit bigger. That is why we are reviewing it again at this point in time to see what kind of effect that might have. But the indications from parents and students passing A levels is that the vast majority of them still want to go and get wider experience of going to a university off Island.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Can I just ask when that report is given to you will it be made available to the Scrutiny Panel?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

It will.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Thank you. Just to advise you all, because we are coming to the close now, of our ongoing work programme, while, of course, we still await the higher education paper that is to be delivered, we understand that the Minister is going to release that after the adoption of the M.T.F.P. by the States, and just to flag up that the Scrutiny Panel are very much interested in looking at that document when it is produced. Also to advise that following on from the school examination scrutiny report that was published in the last term, a potential topic that we are looking to look at is raising standards in school performance. That is something which is also on our agenda in the future, just for you to note.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Sounds very interesting.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

The other point which we should ask you, apart from all the various things that you have listed, as for the next couple of quarters are there any other priorities which the Minister would like to make the Scrutiny Panel aware of?

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

On a day-to-day basis I have these coming at me all the time and sometimes you will have to forgive me for not remembering what I have made or have not made you aware of. But I think you are aware of pretty much everything that we have in mind.

**Director for Education, Sport and Culture:**

You may wish to have a conversation off the record with the panel, Minister, around higher education and just some of the challenges that have materialised.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Some of the subtleties.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Thank you very much. In which case, I would like to bring this hearing to a close and thank you very much for your time and the evidence you have given today. Thank you.

**The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:**

Thank you very much.

[15:25]