

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR TREASURY AND RESOURCES
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 16th NOVEMBER 2010**

Question

Will the Minister explain to members what his position is on cuts in the education service, and whether the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture has his full support in proposing cuts to fee-paying and non-fee paying schools?

Should the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture fail to reduce the subsidy to fee-paying schools, will the Minister insist on further proposals for cuts in education or will he seek to achieve the £65 million target elsewhere?

Answer

The Minister welcomes the question as an opportunity to set the record straight following some media reports, some of which have been misleading.

The Minister for Treasury & Resources has always supported the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture's review of fee-paying school grants, with the specific objective of this making a contribution to the Comprehensive Spending Review.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture has now agreed that more time is needed for consultation on this matter. Members will make the final decision on any proposals to change the grants structure in 2012 and beyond, as part of the 2012 Business Plan.

All Ministers have shown determination in the delivery of the Comprehensive Spending Review. All are united in believing that all areas of States spending must make a contribution to the savings target. Neither fee paying nor non-fee paying schools are immune from consideration for savings.

Concerning the 2011 Business Plan, if the review of grants to fee-paying schools does not result in a reduction in subsidies, the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture will still need to meet his department's savings target as proposed and agreed by the States.

This is no different to any other department where the agreed level of savings were approved by the States in the Business Plan. The position of the Treasury & Resources Minister and the Council of Ministers is clear - that this only alterable by the Minister for Treasury & Resources. The Minister has no intention of altering that approval.

Whilst a reduction in the amount of grants to schools is undoubtedly going to be challenging the Minister also wishes to place on record his full support for the independent schools sector. He believes that the Independent schools in Jersey provide a valuable contribution to the Jersey Education system. Whilst a reduction in the grant arrangements is necessary as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review he believes that the review of grants for independent schools can and should be regarded as an opportunity. Out of this review the independent schools will be

strengthened by the agreement of a long-term funding model and perhaps recognition of the role that they play in the Island.

The Minister for Treasury and Resources undertakes to work closely with the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture during his review of both the independent schools grants structure and his wider Comprehensive Spending Review reviews.