

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

Question

What action, if any will the Chief Minister be taking following the public criticism by members of his ministerial team of the proposals by the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture to meet the CSR targets for cuts set by the Minister for Treasury and Resources, and what further actions will the Chief Minister be taking to ensure that such divisions in his team do not occur in public again?

Answer

I have spoken to the relevant Ministers and I am satisfied that the reported divisions were more a matter of perception than reality.

The Council of Ministers at our meeting last week discussed this matter and we have confirmed our support for the ESC Minister. The Minister informed us that he is extending the timescale for considering proposals to reduce the subsidies to fee paying schools. He will propose any changes in June 2011, as part of the 2012 Business Plan. This will give States Members the opportunity to fully debate the issue. If there are to be changes in school subsidies they will not be implemented until the 2012 financial year, not September 2011 as originally proposed.

Ministers have agreed that all areas of States spending must make a fair contribution to savings and fee-paying schools will not be immune from this. However, extending the timescale will give sufficient time to ensure that the schools and parents are able to cope with the effect of the savings.

The Council will work with the Minister as he develops his proposals and we are satisfied that we will have sufficient opportunity to fully consider any proposals before they are brought to the States.

The Code of Conduct for Ministers respects any Minister's right as a States Member to express their personal political views, provided that they ensure other Ministers are aware of any comments which relate to their responsibilities. All Ministers are aware of this requirement and I am satisfied that they will respect it.