

STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED BUDGET (GOVERNMENT PLAN) 2025-2028 (P.51/2024): COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 22nd November 2024
by the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Background

The Proposed Budget (Government Plan) 2025 – 2028 [[P.51/2024](#)] was lodged on 2nd August 2024, ahead of a proposed debate at the States sitting in the week commencing 25th November 2024. The Budget was accompanied by the publication of the Annex (on 13th August 2024 as [R.133/2024](#)), which provided further details about the departmental spending and additional revenue expenditure.

The Panel's approach to scrutinising the Budget

A list of the revenue programmes examined by the Panel can be found [here](#) and the Panel's Terms of Reference for the Review were agreed in line with other Scrutiny Panels. Specifically, the Terms of Reference were:

1. *To review components of the Proposed Budget 2025-2028 Proposition [[P.51/2024](#)] which are relevant to the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel to determine the following:*
 - a) *The impact of the Budget proposals on departmental budgets, savings, and staffing levels.*
 - b) *Whether the revenue expenditure growth, capital and other projects are appropriate and likely to have a positive impact on Islanders and Island life.*
 - c) *How the proposed revenue expenditure growth, capital and other projects align with the Common Strategic Policy to deliver on the priorities, and in line with the Departments' Business Plans.*
 - d) *Whether the resources allocated to revenue expenditure growth and capital and other projects are sufficient, ensure value for money and demonstrate best use of public funds.*
2. *To assess the impact of the Budget proposals on the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund.*

The Panel received the following letters from Government Ministers in response to its queries about the content of the Government Plan:

- Joint letter from The Minister Education and Lifelong Learning and The Minister for Children and Families on [6th September 2024](#);
- The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs on [12th September 2024](#); and
- The Minister Education and Lifelong Learning on [22nd October](#), [30th October](#) and [31st October 2024](#).

The Panel identified and wrote to external stakeholders as part of the review and received public responses and submissions from the following:

- Jersey Police Authority
- The Children's Commissioner for Jersey
- Brighter Futures
- Jersey Early Years Association
- Jersey Child Care Trust

- The Jersey Association of Child Carers
- Student Loan Support Group Jersey (Facebook community)

The Panel also held three public hearings with Ministers as part of its Government Plan Review:

- The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs on [9th October 2024](#);
- The Minister Education and Lifelong Learning on [11th October 2024](#); and
- The Minister for Children and Families on [16th October 2024](#).

The Panel extends its thanks to all those who contributed to its evidence gathering process.

Panel Amendments

The Panel has lodged two amendments to the Proposed Budget (Government Plan) 2024-2027 [[P.51/2024](#)] related to:

- Apprenticeship support [[P.51/2024 Amd. \(5\)](#)]
- Highlands College Repairs [[P.51/2024 Amd. \(15\)](#)]

The report accompanying each amendment provides further information and rationale.

Main themes and key findings

For ease of reference, the Panel sets out its comments below in an order that reflects the Proposition and Summary Tables in the published Proposed Budget (Government Plan) 2025-2028 proposition (hereafter, ‘the proposed Budget’):

Table 3 – Transfer of monies between States Funds

No transfers are proposed from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund (‘COCF’) to the Consolidated Fund in 2025 as part of the proposed Budget. The COCF is established under Article 24 of the Proceeds of Crime (Jersey) Law 1999 and is a ‘special fund’ for the purposes of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2005¹. In previous years, there have been transfers out of the COCF to fund various capital projects, for example, prison improvement phases, firearms range and the sexual assault centre (Dewberry House).

The Panel asked the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs (‘MJHA’) about the status of the proposed schemes that were to be funded by the COCF, namely, the Firearms Range, the Prison Improvement works, and Dewberry House Sexual Assault Referral Centre (listed on page 53 of the proposed Budget report). During a public review hearing on 9th October 2024 the MJHA confirmed that projects that previously transferred funding was carried forward for projects that had not yet been delivered.

With regards to Dewberry House, it was confirmed that early 2025 would see the tender procurement process complete and contracts drawn up, with anticipated ground works to commence on the new build at the new location on Bagatelle Road².

¹ [Proceeds of Crime \(Jersey\) Law 1999 \(jerseylaw.je\)](#) (accessed 28/11/2023)

² [Letter](#) – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 12th September 2024

The MJHA further advised that there would be an additional request in relation to funding from the COCF in relation to potentially funding laptops for the Honorary Police.³

Table 4 – Major Projects

Per part (f) of the Proposition the States Assembly is asked to approve costs and changes to ‘Major Projects’, which is defined under Article 1 of the Public Finances Law 2019⁴.

There are three major projects listed in this Budget which fall under the remit of the Panel, these are examined in the headed paragraphs below.

Le Squez (Department for Children, Education, Young People and Skills, hereafter ‘CYPES’)

There is total major project approval of £7.5 million for Le Squez. This was first approved as a ‘major project’ in the Government Plan for 2024 and had previously been part of the ‘New Schools and Educational Developments’ Grouped Head of Expenditure.

In the Panel’s 2023 [Comments](#) relating to the proposed Government Plan for 2024–2027, it was highlighted that further details were required to describe the scope of the project. Originally, it was understood that the project would update youth and community facilities in the Le Squez area of St Clement, however, the Panel subsequently noted that the accompanying Child Rights Impact Assessment for the project referenced that it would include major alterations to Samarès School.

The Budget report states that the development of the youth centre at Le Squez has been “reprofiled” to allow a new youth facility in St Helier to be brought forward in the earlier years of the Budget⁵. In a public hearing on 16th October 2024 the Panel asked the Minister for Children and Families (‘MCF’) about this decision. The MCF advised that it was “really important that we had a facility in the town area”⁶, he further explained that:

*The important thing about the Le Squez project is while that is another built-up area, **there is already an existing offer** and so the monies that were allocated to that project were just to make some slight modernisation improvements. The project which is in Le Squez will still continue and the work that was planned will now commence in 2028. All that has happened is we have nudged it forward a couple of years to allow us to focus on the town development. It does not mean that the Le Squez project will not get exactly what it needs. It is certainly not unsafe or anything like that at the moment. It just needs some little modernisation.*⁷

The Panel questioned the prioritisation of youth facilities in St Helier over the facilities at Le Squez. The Minister advised that:

³ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 9th October 2024, p. 13

⁴ [Public Finances \(Jersey\) Law 2019 \(jerseylaw.je\)](#) (accessed 28/11/2023)

⁵ ‘Proposed Budget 2025-2028’ [P.51/2024], Government of Jersey, August 2024, p. 55

⁶ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2024, p. 22

⁷ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2024, p. 23 [emphasis added]

...putting it in perspective, back in 2019 when the St. Helier youth project was first suggested, there was budget allocated to it, which then got moved to another project in a very similar way.⁸

During the same hearing, the Director for Improvement and Transformation, C.Y.P.E.S., advised that officers from the Youth Service had given a steer in terms of priority for the Island's youth service provision and further explained that:

... Of course, Le Squez does need modernisation, and it is, as you framed it, really important for the community. It is important for the school and the services that go in there. Unfortunately, there will be a delay for that or a movement back in the plan, but then that just reflects the prioritisation and the deliverability of the whole capital programme⁹.

The Panel is unclear exactly how this reprofiling impacts both the school and the youth services provided at Le Squez. The Panel also notes that the Youth Centre for St Helier has not yet been proposed as a major project and is part of the 'New Schools and Educational Expenditure' Grouped Head of Expenditure and is likely to see a centre delivered in 2028 (see below for further details on this).

'Mont à Labbé Secondary' (CYPES)

There is a revision to the total major project approval required for Mont à Labbé Secondary. The first approval for this major project was provided in the Government Plan for 2024, as in 2023 the project was being developed under the 'New Schools and Educational Developments' grouped Head of Expenditure. Previous approval had been provided for the sum of £23 million, however, the proposed Budget increases the sum by £18 million, to a total of £41 million. Furthermore, the Budget document advised that there would be a rephrasing of the Government Capital Programme, which would see the project commence in 2026 (instead of earlier, as was proposed by the previous Government Plan for 2024-2027).

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning ('MELL') advised the Panel about the decision-making process for the prioritisation of capital spending and explained that the Government had decided to progress the projects that were "ready to go"¹⁰ with planning permission. With regards to decision making around the CYPES capital projects the Minister stated that:

I do feel, and I am sure some will disagree, that there had perhaps previously been a habit for many years I could say in Government to everything was a priority when it came to a capital project. You cannot prioritise everything. You have to decide what you are or not going to do. I believe there was a figure of £17 million put aside last year and £5 million was spent. That is an example of when large priorities are made and money is allocated that simply cannot be spent. I think we can spend money and get projects done now.¹¹

⁸ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2024, p. 24

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 11th October 2024, p.11

¹¹ Ibid

The Panel questioned the MELL about the timescale for the project and highlighted concerns about what impact a delay to the project could have on children and families. The MELL opined that:

There are also contingency plans that we can put in place for the increasing number. One of the possible things that could be not an advantage but a mitigating point about the delay is I think that the plans previously [...] perhaps were a bit small for the school. I think it gives us an opportunity to readdress that. The example being, I think we all wish we would have built Les Quennevais a bit bigger nowadays. Hindsight is a wonderful thing and that is not a criticism; it is just where we are. I think we have got to take the advantages where they are from these projects being delayed.¹²

With regards to the revised project for Mont à Labbé Secondary, the Director for Education explained that:

As the Minister has said, the design brief we have given to J.P.H. [Jersey Property Holdings] will be for a bigger, better Mont à L'Abbé at the end of this. We have done considerable work with mainstream schools that used to have additional resource centres, A.R.C.s, remodelling them to provisions and setting up new nurture provisions - primary and secondary - that will meet the needs of children who may need Mont à L'Abbé at some point¹³.

The Panel was disappointed to hear of the delay to 2026 for any work to begin on this major project but wants to understand more about its proposed extension. The Panel has arranged to visit Mont à Labbé School on 20th November 2024, however, the outcome of the visit is not available in time for the drafting of these Comments.

Ambulance, Fire and Rescue (AFR) Headquarters (Justice and Home Affairs)

There is total major project approval of £24.403 million for the AFR Headquarters project, which is unchanged from previous years. In its review of the 2024 Government Plan the Panel had heard that the total funding figure would need to change as it was based on work that was undertaken in 2019, however, this has remained the same for this year's proposed Budget.

The Panel reflected on its reviews of the previous two Government Plans, which identified that the project had been delayed due to the wider estate review and required decisions to be made about the town primary school estate, most specifically the future development and site of Rouge Bouillion school (adjacent to the current Fire and Rescue Headquarters). At the time of these Comments, there remains no publicised decision about the future of the Rouge Bouillion school site.

During a public hearing with the Panel on 9th October 2024, the Chief Officer of Justice and Home Affairs explained that the AFR headquarters project could change, so that separate headquarters are retained for the two services:

*...the ambulance, fire and rescue headquarters is in a feasibility stage at the moment to explore what the **potential for 2 different headquarters looks like as opposed to a joint one**. That feasibility work will be completed by the end of*

¹² [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 11th October 2024, p.11

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 13

this year and we have offered to come and give the panel a private briefing on that. As result of that, that will not be moved through to full business case stage - well, a new outline business case stage - for some time because the funding does not kick in until 2028.¹⁴

The Panel also asked the Minister about the status of the feasibility of the project in its quarterly hearing in October. In respect of the timescale for the project being delayed further until 2028, the MJHA confirmed that:

... we have looked at things that can be achieved in the next 2 years and we have obviously realigned some things which are going to take longer. So, considering realistic estimates on delivery capacity in Government and the construction sector to commence this programme of work, so that is why it has been pushed back. We will be working with Jersey Property Holdings to ensure that the current buildings are appropriately maintained in the meantime, because obviously both fire and ambulance are deteriorating buildings and they need maintenance, so that needs to be done. Further feasibility work will be undertaken in the remainder of this year in order to understand the programme and costs of the proposed solution¹⁵.

With regards to the decision about a location, the Minister has indicated that the school and both service headquarters could possibly all remain located at Rouge Bouillon:

*Work will continue working in collaboration with Jersey Property Holdings and Children, Young People, Education and Skills colleagues and Ministers to understand and agree the way forward with future use of the Rouge Bouillon site due to competing demands and the sequencing of these developments. **A shift in strategy however indicated that it would be more reasonable and realistic, taking into account a number of factors including maintaining a Rouge Bouillon location for all facilities (Ambulance, Fire & Rescue, and a school), to deliver separate Headquarters for each of Ambulance and Fire & Rescue.***

Budgets for this project have been re-profiled to reflect the anticipated revised timescales and sequencing, with substantive commencement in 2028. As discussed at my recent Quarterly hearing with you, we would be very pleased to provide the panel with a private briefing on these emerging plans once further feasibility work is complete, which we expect will be towards the end of 2024 or early 2025¹⁶.

The Panel has reflected on its previous comments about this project and remains concerned by the continued delays and the cost to the public from the extended timeframe and uncertainty. In 2023 the Panel had found that £1.4 million of public money would be spent on the maintenance of the current States of Jersey Ambulance station during that budget period. The longer timescale required for the replacement Ambulance and Fire Service Headquarters - whether these be a joint or separate - will likely mean that there are higher maintenance costs for the current ageing buildings housing the services.

¹⁴ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 9th October 2024, p.4 [emphasis added]

¹⁵ [Transcript](#) – Quarterly Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 9th October 2024, p.4

¹⁶ [Letter](#) – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 12th September 2024 [emphasis added]

The Panel will accept the MJHA's offer of a briefing on this matter and will seek further clarification about the cost of the feasibility work undertaken to date before the shift in strategy was made.

Table 5i – Revenue Heads of Expenditure (HoE)

Per part (g) of the Proposition the States Assembly is asked to approve the HoE for each Department from the funding available in the Consolidated Fund.

Split of CYPES into two HoE

With reference to the CYPES budget, this was previously consolidated under a HoE for 'Children, Education, Young People and Skills,' however, this has now been split into Departmental Expenditure to separate out 'Education and Lifelong Learning' and 'Children and Families', following the creation of separate Ministerial portfolios.

In October 2024, the Panel asked whether the split of the HoE had been straightforward and was advised that:

The bottom line is likely to change because we have made the split between the 2 departments in a bit of a hurry, and some of the central departments will need a bit of adjustment next year¹⁷.

It was explained that there were some straightforward separations, for example, with regards to specific service lines within CYPES, however, there was more difficulty in separating the central, business support-type services¹⁸. The Panel notes that in the Service Level Analysis of the Annex document, both the Education and Lifelong Learning portfolio and the Children and Families portfolio have a proportion of budget for the 'Office of the Chief Officer'.

¹⁷ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2024, p.7

¹⁸ Ibid

This is divided as:

Service Line: Office of the Chief Officer Net Revenue Expenditure					
Department	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total
Education and Lifelong Learning	7,163,000	6,873,000	8,107,000	9,610,000	31,753,000
Children and Families	17,636,000	15,763,000	14,351,000	12,817,000	60,567,000
Total	24,799,000	22,636,000	22,458,000	22,427,000	

Following the public hearings that the Panel held for its Budget review, the Council of Ministers lodged an amendment ([number 26](#)) regarding the allocation of CYPES Budgets. It proposes a technical amendment to remove £5,862,000 from the HoE for Children and Families and move it to the HoE for Education and Lifelong Learning. A specific breakdown of the Service Level Analysis has not been provided with the amendment, so the Panel is unable to comment in any further detail at this time.

Education and Lifelong Learning

Over the course of this 4-year Budget period the estimated HoE (pre-Amendment 26) for this department will grow from an estimated £169.64 million in 2025 to £173.401 million in 2028. The majority of this growth is either inflation and formula driven or is due to revenue growth (see later on in these Comments for further information).

Children and Families

The Panel questioned the MCF about the reducing balance of the Children and Families HoE over the life of the proposed Budget as the estimated net revenue expenditure for 2025 is £55.939 million, this changes to £55.309 million in 2026, £55.244 million in 2027 and £55.232 million in 2028. The Panel was advised by the Head of Finance Business Partnering for CYPES that the reducing balance related to two main factors, namely, identified savings and the cessation of some non-recurrent funding:

But the reducing balance that you were talking about is entirely the value-for-money programme. Also, one of the original growth plans from 2023 was a growth award of £1.3 million for social worker recruitment and retention that went down to £900,000 in 2024 and settles at £450,000 because there was a package of non-recurrent actions that were taken. So, there are new savings targets and then there is the profile of the original 2023 investment that tapers down. That is why the sums go down, those 2 things¹⁹.

Furthermore, part of the expenditure for each department includes ‘Grants and subsidies payments’. The Panel notes that there is £631,000 estimated expenditure per annum from Children and Families (and £9.516 million from Education and Lifelong Learning). In a submission to the Panel from Brighter Futures it was highlighted that it is difficult to identify areas in the proposed Budget that clearly support the third sector

¹⁹ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2024, p. 7

or not for profit industry²⁰ and stated that “*this sector is neither acknowledged, respected or clearly supported in this Government Budget 2025-2028*”²¹. Brighter Futures suggested that there should be a central fund allocated for providing funding to the Third Sector.

Justice and Home Affairs (‘JHA’)

The estimated HoE for JHA increases in 2025 to an estimated £42.425 million (from £40,069 million approved for 2024), but then reduces slightly to £42.066 million in 2026, and £42.110 million in both 2027 and 2028. The Panel notes that these changes are largely due to savings targets (see below for further comments).

States of Jersey Police (SoJP)

The estimated HoE for SoJP increases from £27.335 million in 2024 to £30.185 million in 2025. It then reduces to £29.975 million in 2026, and £29.954 million in 2027 and 2028. The Panel understands that the increase of approximately £3 million for 2025 largely relates to the 2024 pay award (of approximately £1.984 million), a budget transfer of £679,000 for the Combined Control Room controllers and also a transfer of £76,000 to move a Communications staff to SoJP from the Cabinet Office.

The Panel received a submission from the States of Jersey Police Authority (‘JPA’) (available to read in full [here](#)) which advised the Panel that:

*the JPA cautiously supports the proposed 2025 funding allocation, on the condition that the Government of Jersey continues to provide financial backing for the two major operations that have places significant pressure on SOJP resources, all whilst maintaining support for their ongoing ‘business as usual’ responsibilities.*²²

The JPA submission also highlights that growth funding previously allocated for digital forensic capabilities has been reduced by £47,000²³.

Savings

The ‘Savings Proposals’ are presented on page 106 of the Budget document. The Panel compared the 2025 Budget savings proposals to the previous Value for Money targets for 2024, which shows that the targets for 2025 are lower than for 2024:

Department	2025 savings²⁴	2024 VFM savings²⁵
Education and Lifelong Learning	£1,449,000	£2,737,000 (previously jointly, as CYPES)
Children and Families	£537,000	
Justice and Home Affairs	£334,000	£572,000
States of Jersey Police	£172,000	£422,000

²⁰ [Written Submission](#) – Brighter Futures – 26th September 2024

²¹ Ibid

²² [Written Submission](#) – States of Jersey Police Authority – 4th October 2024

²³ Ibid

²⁴ ‘Proposed Budget (Government Plan) 2025-2028’ [P.51/2024], Government of Jersey, p.106

²⁵ ‘Government Plan 2024-2027’, Government of Jersey, 14th December 2023, p.57 Note: Figures stated as per the approved Government Plan, as amended rather than the Proposed Government Plan lodged as P.72/2023

The Panel asked how the targeted savings proposals in the Budget (summarised on page 106 of P.51/2024) would impact each Department's HoE. In a hearing with the MCF, the Panel was advised that:

Head of Finance Business Partnering, C.Y.P.E.S:

The savings targets that all departments have are split into 3 main categories. One is around senior posts, which is fairly small in this area. Another is around exiting Liberte House. So, we will lose the cost as well as the budget because we will not need the budget. That will have no impact as the services are consolidated in other existing buildings. Then there remains a residual target, which the service will tackle to become generally more efficient, so we are in a fairly good position with that.²⁶

The Panel asked about possible impact on service delivery and was advised by the Chief Officer that there would be no impact on frontline positions. He highlighted that the service was "demographic driven" and so there would be monitoring to ensure that any demographic pressures that could impact the budget were detected and discussed with the Treasurer²⁷.

In a submission to the Panel from the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey (OCCJ), it was highlighted that "*the OCCJ is concerned about the impact of these cuts on the delivery of services and support for children and their families across Government departments*"²⁸. The Panel notes that the OCCJ's own budget (provided through the Cabinet Office) is due to reduce during this 4-year budget term from £980,000 per annum in 2025, to £919,000 per annum for 2026, 2027 and 2028. The Panel highlights that it is important to ensure that this organisation is provided with sufficient resource to provide a good service for Children in Jersey and constraints on its budget, when it should be operating independently of Government could be restrictive.

For the JHA the Panel had queried how the target savings proposals would be achieved and noted that the targets for 2025 were lower than those set for 2024 and equated to approximately 1% of the JHA HoE. It was noted that this was a lower proportion than some departments and is a different approach to the previous Government Plan, where all departments were provided with the same percentage target.

The MJHA advised the Panel that the exact method of delivering the savings was under consideration, and that advice would be provided by the JHA senior leadership team:

When the work is complete, they will advise me on a range of the options that can be considered in order to ensure that those savings are delivered. This will include a very small reduction in the number of senior roles in the department. The savings were calculated as a proportion of civil servants grade 11 in the department. We fully recognise the savings apportionment for the department was very small in comparison with other departments, recognising that obviously it is primarily a front-line nature services department and so it is essential to provide those services. The savings also include a reduction in previously agreed growth, which started in 2024. It is obvious that the

²⁶ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2024

²⁷ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2024

²⁸ [Written Submission](#) – Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey – 30th September 2024

department is also carrying cost pressures, which again the senior leadership team in J.H.A. are working to resolve, treat, mitigate, or accept on a risk-assessed basis and focusing on what is essential to deliver front-line services safely and what can be paused or deferred. An example of this would be the provision of training, development or equipment purchasing in some services. The detail of this is being worked on and again the Chief Officer will provide me with options as and when that work is actually done.²⁹

With regards to the SoJP, the Panel reflected on its 2023 review of the Government Plan where it had found that the SoJP's HoE was approximately 90% staff costs and 10% other operating expenses. It was explained that this remained similar for this Budget period. In a public hearing on 9th October 2024, in response to questions about impact of savings on service delivery, the Chief of Police advised that cost pressures were also having an impact in addition to savings³⁰. He explained that:

For example, in the non-pay side of things our I.T. (information technology) particularly with the Home Office - we have connections into the Home Office to go to a number of very, very important databases - that bill has risen by 102 per cent since 2021. For the Digital Forensics Unit, which is how we investigate nearly all our crimes now, very effectively, I might say, because it reduces the cost into places like the Royal Courts and all the rest of because of more guilty pleas, that software is always moving on, always becoming more complicated and, therefore, more costly. Everybody is familiar with utility costs have risen and utility costs have risen by 22 per cent for us - and we have a 65 per cent electric fleet and we hope to get even closer to the 100 per cent - as well as other costs around training particularly related to firearms training. So, it is not just the savings, it is also the additional costs, which of course everyone has. We all accept those costs have gone up, but the budget does not necessarily come along with it, so efficiencies are required.³¹

Summary Table 5ii – Capital and Other Projects Heads of Expenditure

Part (g) of the Proposition P.51/2024 also asks the States Assembly to approve the amounts to be used for the Capital and Other Projects Heads of Expenditure from the funding available in the Consolidated Fund, as per Table 5ii.

The Panel will not make a comment about every project in this section (and some have been referenced elsewhere in this paper under 'Major Projects'), however, some points the Panel wishes to highlight are:

Grouped Head of Expenditure, Upgrades to CYPES Estates

The Budget report details that there is an estimate of £7.790 million in the grouped HoE for 2025. The report advises that this will be used for a range of projects. As in previous years, it is highlighted that the use of a grouped Head of Expenditure allows the Government the flexibility to reprioritise based on the urgency of a project and the state of readiness to take it forward in a particular year.

Projects which appear to have been delayed, changed, or cancelled:

²⁹ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 9th October 2024, p. 13

³⁰ Ibid, p. 6

³¹ Ibid, p. 6

- Field developments and Play Space: per the last Government Plan, this project was due to receive funding in 2025 and 2026. The Budget proposes £1.415 million of funding in 2028; however, the Panel has noted a letter from the Minister for Infrastructure to the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel which detailed that this project had been “rescoped and cancelled”³².
- Music development has been cancelled; this had previously had £4.6 million of funding estimated across 3 years of the previous Government Plan.
- There was previously funding in this HoE for Highlands College and University College Jersey. The Panel is aware that funding for the maintenance of Highlands has moved to another HoE and has made comments about the required repairs to the building in its Amendment ([number 15](#)) to the Budget.
- Therapeutic Children’s Homes – previous Government Plan reviews did not plan for further funding for this project after 2024, however, the Panel learned that the 2025 funding was to transform a property that was in the ownership of the Government into a 16-19 home provision³³.

Projects that are new for this Budget period are:

- La Passerelle School: to receive £3 million of funding in 2025. The Panel asked the MELL about the decision to prioritise this as a new project in 2025 and was advised that:

*Simply, I will say for my priorities there is an incredibly obvious need. There were children who did not have a place to be educated and when you put that together with the fact that we have a site, we have a place, we know what we are going to do with it, [...] I think the impact of that build on a cohort of young people that are not accessing education at the moment is significant, and there is a timescale where it can be done. I am not criticising anything that has gone before, I am looking ahead and saying it would be nice to be able to say something is completed and in action within a year, and that is really good*³⁴.

- Education Estate Wi-Fi: for £840,000 of funding in 2025. In response to questions, the Panel was advised that funding for the implementation of wi-fi upgrades had also been provided in 2024 and so the total cost was £1.3 million³⁵.

Projects that were continued (with some changes) from previous Government Plan funding:

- Youth Services: the Budget provides for £1.415 million in 2028. This project has been changed, as the previous Government Plan had projected £1.550 million spend across 2024-25.
- Residential Homes and Secure Settings – £500,000 of funding per annum has been extended into 2027 and 2028.

³² [Letter](#) – Minister for Infrastructure to EHI Scrutiny Panel – 29th August 2024

³³ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2024

³⁴ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 11th October 2024, p.13

³⁵ *Ibid*, p.8

- DDA Works: previously had £700,000 per year for each of the 2024-2027 Government Plan period but has been reduced to £700,000 in 2025 and £300,000 in 2026.
- School improvements: the estimated expenditure on this project has changed across the four years of this Budget.

The Panel reiterates its recommendations from [S.R.21/2022](#) and [2023 Comments](#) regarding the transparency of projects, funding and priorities of projects being developed as part of ‘Upgrades to CYPES Estates’. The Budget provides a breakdown of the grouped HoE on page 56 of the Report. Whilst it is understood that the intent of the grouped HoE is to provide flexibility for the Government to work on progressing the most suitable projects, however, highlights that it makes it more challenging for Scrutiny and the public to track confirmed intent on spending public funds.

New School and Educational Developments

The Budget report details that there is an estimate of £2.5 million in the grouped Head of Expenditure for 2025. This remains the same in 2026, increases to £4.9 million in 2027 and returns to £2.5 million in 2028. The report advises that this will be used to provide for a town-based school at Gas Place in later years and also features new funding for a youth centre facility at the Ann Street Brewery site.

In a hearing on 16th October 2024, the Assistant Minister for Children and Families (with responsibility for Youth Services) provided the Panel with further details about the newly proposed youth centre facility:

...the youth centre will be a youth and community centre, and it will also be a home for the Youth Enquiry Service, which is the front-line advice service for young people. So, monies have been set aside in the 2025 Budget and obviously through the C.S.P. it is proposed. There is a sum of money. Negotiations are still ongoing, of course, and some of that is commercially sensitive. But the plan is to have a site on the Ann Street Brewery site, which will cover both of those functions for young people. It will include an inside hall, will include a kick pitch, which is on the roof, and the important thing that we are doing at the moment is engaging with the neighbours because although there is a lot of development going on in that area, there are also lots of existing households in this area. We want to make sure that while it is a great facility for young people, other people in the area are not adversely affected. We are engaging with neighbours to see how we can make it as least disruptive to their lives as possible, bearing in mind that some people living in that area there might be a fantastic new facility right on their doorstep. We have already had some pre-planning advice and one of them is to decrease the lighting on the kick pitch outside so that there is no light pollution into people’s homes. There are some sensible measures that we can take to reduce noise and also dispersal at the end of the session to make sure that not everyone comes rushing out at the same time. They get dispersed through safe pathways, which is of least disruption to neighbours. To answer your question, the monies are allocated in the Budget and will be used for that purpose³⁶.

³⁶ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2024

At this point the Panel does not have a breakdown of how much of the proposed funding will be used for this project, or others being developed through this HoE and how this will be divided over the four years of the Budget before the youth centre facility is in place, which was confirmed to be projected for 2028.

The Panel asked about ownership of the Ann Street site, and it was advised that it be owned by the project developer until completion and then it would become part of the Government of Jersey estate. The Assistant Minister advised that this approach would provide insurance and mitigate for any problems. The Panel has not been provided with any details about how the Government of Jersey would facilitate the property transfer or purchase.

Furthermore, in a letter to the Panel, MELL advised that the construction of a new school at Gas Place, St. Helier was expected to commence in 2028 and that feasibility work for its development would be undertaken by offers in Jersey Property Holdings and CYPES. It was highlighted that a key milestone is the acquisition of the Gas Place site. From previous Government Plan reviews, the Panel understands that this will be acquired through the Head of Expenditure in the Government Plan of 'Land Acquisition'.

The Panel highlights that the two main projects in this grouped HoE are currently in early feasibility stages and will only see more visible progress towards the end of this Budget period, in 2028. For the past two years the Panel has commented on the transparency of the decision-making process for capital projects and their prioritisation and the allocation of funding and echoes this in these Comments with regards to the current projects.

Major Refurbishments and Upgrades

This Head of Expenditure sits under the responsibility of the Infrastructure and Environment department; however, the Panel has taken an interest in it as it includes funding for the refurbishment of fire safety in the CYPES Estate and Highlands College Refurbishment. The Panel has provided comments on the Highlands College aspect of this funding as part of the report accompanying the Amendment Number 15 to P.51/2024 and will not repeat them here.

Army and Sea Cadet Headquarters

The Panel notes that the Government's position on this project appears to be unchanged from its previous reviews of Government Plans in 2022 and 2023, suggesting that there are challenges with making progress and joining up with other capital projects and wider planning. In a letter on 12th September 2024, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs advised the Panel that the department would *"continue in 2025 to review locations, designs against Army and Sea Cadets requirements that will enable a new shared Headquarters that will complete a States of Jersey Assembly agreement in 2021. This project is a pre-requisite to the development \ re-use of the Rouge Bouillon site as they currently reside on that location"*³⁷.

The Government has allocated £200,000 for feasibility of this project in 2025, but the total cost for the project is £4.993 million over the next three years. As reference, in the Government Plan period for 2022-2025 the total projected cost for this project was

³⁷ [Letter](#) – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 12th September 2024

£3.393 million, this was unchanged for in 2023 – 2026 but increased to £4.993 million for the period 2024-2027.

The Chief Officer for Justice and Home Affairs advised that:

The £4.9 million is the total amount that was allocated in the Government Plan with this budget. It has been there a number of years as we have been working on the feasibility. There have been a number of different sites in play in that time. We have had good discussions with the army and sea cadet leaders, which continue. I think we are narrowing down now on to a viable option working closely with Jersey Property Holdings and continue to work closely with the cadet leaders. I would hope that we would be able to brief the panel on that in a bit more detail in the next few months as we get agreement around that. It needs to go up through the ministerial government agreement route first. We are maintaining with the cadet leaders that that £4.9 million in the plan is the maximum amount available so that the development plans need to fit within that amount³⁸.

Next Passport Project

The Budget estimates that this capital project will require £425,000 in 2025. It is a new IT platform that will be shared between the Crown Dependencies and Gibraltar, which will renew and replace the current passport application and administration system, providing a full digital service and integration with existing systems, whilst maintaining the ‘Island variant’ passport. In a letter on 12th September 2024, the Minister advised the Panel that the project had been on hold for a number do years due to delays with HM Passport office but was due to commence in 2025 and was anticipated to be running by 2027³⁹.

Revenue Expenditure Growth (Appendix 3: Supplementary Financial Table)

The Panel summarises its key comments about the additional revenue growth funding below:

Extend Nursery and Childcare Provision – CSP

The Government proposes the following revenue expenditure growth for this over the next Budget period:

2025	2026	2027	2028
£1,517,000	£2,358,000	£3,423,000	£4,629,000

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning has indicated that this expenditure would be used to support the Government’s Common Strategic Policy commitment to extend nursery and childcare provision.

On 30th October 2024 the MELI presented a report, Early Years Plan [[R.168/2024](#)] which details the Government Plans for the Early Years sector, this was supported by a statement made in the States Assembly on 12th November 2024.

³⁸ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 9th October 2024, p. 18

³⁹ [Letter](#) – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 12th September 2024

Per the information available in the proposed Budget report, the Panel understands that the additional funding would be used to:

- phased an introduction of nursery and childcare provision aged 2-3 years with additional needs;
- make comprehensive training and development available for staff in the Early Years sector, aiming to improve quality of provision and also improve recruitment and retention;
- fund a pilot scheme to increase access to unused spaces in the primary school nurseries; and
- conduct an assessment of nursery capacity in St. Helier.

The Panel asked stakeholders in the Early Years sector what impact the Government's plans could have on the sector. This received a range of responses from the stakeholders who contacted the Panel. The Jersey Child Care Trust (JCCT) indicated that it was encouraged by the Government's commitment to invest in services and support for early years children and their families⁴⁰. However, this view was not shared across the sector. The Jersey Association of Child Carers response was that it would be "*Damaging*"⁴¹ and the Jersey Early Years Association (JEYA) stated that "*In short, we believe that the Minister's plans are unworkable and present an existential threat to the very existence of the Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) Sector represented by our Members*"⁴².

Extension of provision to 2–3-year-olds

The previous Government Plan for 2024 – 2027 provided some additional funding for 'Investment in Young People across CYPES frontline services' (£2.615 million in 2024) and the Panel was advised that this would include investment to support early years provisions, including younger children aged 2-3. However, the Panel found that there was a lack of clarity on the split of that investment funding across various frontline services and so the specific amount attributable to early years was not confirmed.

The Early Years Plan says "*Pilots in schools will provide new funded places for 2–3-year-olds, initially focussing on those children with additional needs*"⁴³.

The Panel understands that, following an approach from MELL, the JCCT has launched 'Play and Learn at d'Auvergne', which is a new registered nursery for children who will meet the criteria for the Best Start Plus Nursery Funding ('BSPNF') Programme (which funds part time nursery places for 2–3-year-olds living in poverty and with developmental delays). The JCCT advised that:

*Specifically, around nursery provision for 2–3-year-olds, the proposed targeted approach is supported by a wealth of research that shows the greatest impact of this type of investment is experienced by those living in poverty and with developmental delays. By July 2024, 10 children had been unable to find a nursery place and therefore missed out on accessing the BSPNF (Best Start Plus Nursery Funding) Programme for that academic year.*⁴⁴

⁴⁰ [Written Submission](#) – Jersey Child Care Trust – 27th September 2024

⁴¹ [Written Submission](#) – Jersey Association of Child Carers – 6th October 2024

⁴² [Written Submission](#) – Jersey Early Years Association – 24th September 2024

⁴³ Early Years Plan [[R.168/2024](#)], presented by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, 30th October 2024

⁴⁴ [Written Submission](#) – Jersey Child Care Trust – 27th September 2024

Jersey Association of Child Carers highlighted concerns about the approach of having 2–3-year-olds in a school setting. Their full submission can be read [here](#).

The Jersey Early Years Association (JEYA) also raised a number of concerns in its submission to the Panel including that “*The Minister’s view is that the capacity that is created by moving 3–4-year-olds to the government’s provision [...] can be used to accommodate this additional demand. This view is unfounded and contrary to reality*”⁴⁵. Their full submission can be read [here](#).

The Panel put questions about the Early Years model to the MELL in a public hearing on 11th October 2024, and with regards to the provision for 2–3-year-olds the Minister advised that:

*...the need to extend provision, particularly 2- to 3-year-olds and the recommendation from that panel was to do that as quickly as possible and the way in which we do that may well use government resources. But that is not in competition with the nurseries that already exist, but it complements and helps support parents and children to have a nursery place.*⁴⁶

The MELL emphasised that the pilots would be run in order to see the impact on the wider sector, and in a statement to the States Assembly on 12th November 2024, he advised that “*from September of this year we have 3 schools operating pilot schemes, 2 provisions for 2- to 3-year-olds have opened prioritising those with greatest need. These children were unable to access current nursery provision*”⁴⁷.

The Panel has not had the opportunity to ask for further information about how the pilots will be assessed but it would like to request further details about these during the course of 2025.

The Panel finds that there is a disparity between the Minister’s statement that there was “*extensive engagement conducted with a wide range of early years sector representatives through a series of Roundtable events held late in 2023 and early 2024*”⁴⁸ and the concerns raised by JEYA⁴⁹ and Jersey Association of Child Carers⁵⁰ that there was insufficient engagement.

Workforce recruitment, retention, and training

The Government’s CSP ambition includes supporting the Early Years workforce with recruitment, retention, and training. The Panel asked stakeholders how this could be improved. The JCCT advised that flexibility was key and suggested that this could be improved, providing an example that the Level 3 course at Highlands College required attendance in person at the college and suggested that there could be additional ways to assess the competency of participants, including online, workplace assessment, accreditation for prior learning experience and more flexible study units. They

45 [Written Submission](#) – Jersey Early Years Association – 24th September 2024

46 [Transcript](#) – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 11th October 2024

47 [Hansard](#) – 12th November 2024

48 Early Years Plan [[R.168/2024](#)], presented by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, 30th October 2024

49 [Written Submission](#) – Jersey Early Years Association – 24th September 2024

50 [Written Submission](#) – Jersey Association of Child Carers – 6th October 2024

suggested that “*This greater flexibility would allow students to better work, study and manage their family lives and potentially lead to a lower dropout rate*”⁵¹.

With regards to specific training the JCCT suggested that:

*MAYBO and Good Autism Practice should be mandatory training going forwards, the requirements written into the Regulations and the Minister’s plans to include funding to enable these courses to run*⁵².

Furthermore, with regards to the timing for training courses and accessibility for the staff JCCT highlighted that:

*...this sector has historically been often expected to attend a range of training and development courses in the evening after a busy and long shift and usually unpaid. Offering a payment to settings to enable the release of staff to attend training would make a significant impact on levels of attendance, ability to learn and feeling valued*⁵³.

In response to the same question about how training could be improved, the Jersey Association of Child Carers were in agreement that paid for on the job training with day release work would help to retain and retrain staff in the sector, however, the offered a contrasting view about the timing of courses to the JCCT, citing that evening and weekends were currently the only times available to them to do this. Regarding training, JEYA advised the Panel that:

*...any attempt to improve training and development for staff in Early Years would largely be premature and ineffective. JEYA firmly believes that a new model for Early Years needs to be established.*⁵⁴

The Minister states in the Early Years Plan that “ongoing engagement with key stakeholders is required to encourage collaboration and strengthen decision making”⁵⁵. However, noting the concerns raised by some key stakeholders in the PVI sector, the Panel suggests that the Minister should address the approach to engagement as a matter of urgency to ensure that their concerns are considered and discussed at the pilot stage.

School meals

The Government proposes the following revenue expenditure growth for this over the next Budget period:

2025	2026	2027	2028
£1,169,000	£1,169,000	£1,169,000	£1,169,000

The Panel was provided with the following information when it asked the MELL about the additional expenditure:

51 [Written Submission](#) – Jersey Child Care Trust – 27th September 2024

52 Ibid

53 Ibid

54 [Written Submission](#) – Jersey Early Years Association – 24th September 2024

55 Early Years Plan [[R.168/2024](#)], presented by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, 30th October 2024

Per:	2025 Requirement	Movements
2022 - 100 Days business Case	2,574,000.00	
Additional Costs		
- Employing Serving staff		527,000.00
- Meal uptake from 57.5% to 80%		518,000.00
- Cost of fresh fruit in primaries		163,000.00
- Operations Manager		61,000.00
- Cost of Raw materials		55,000.00
- Sensitivity analysis		24,000.00
- Operational Costs		7,000.00
Removed Costs		
- Increased uptake initiative		-67,000.00
- Jersey Business resource		-60,000.00
Cost reappraised and deemed lower (therefore reduction in funding required)		
- Extending meals up to 18		-59,000.00
2024 - CSP business case	3,743,000.00	
Movement	1,169,000.00	1,169,000.00

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From the above, the Panel understands that the £1.169 million is the additional funding required in addition to the 2022 business case, which is reported above as £2,574,000.

However, the Panel cannot reconcile this figure with the amounts that it had understood to have been approved in the 2023 – 2026 Government Plan. At the time of the Panel’s review in 2022 the reported figures were:

Funding allocation requests in Government Plan 2023-2026 (£000):

2023	2024	2025	2026
1,654	1,611	1,671	1,701

The Panel highlights that staff costs appear to make up £588,000 of the annual expenditure, with £61,000 for the cost of an operations manager and £527,000 for the employment of serving staff. The Minister advised that “*there are 54 catering assistants being recruited, and there are currently 16 schools providing school meals. There are launch dates for the remaining schools*”⁵⁷. The Panel has not asked for further details about the other cost lines in the time available for this review but notes a separate cost of £163,000 to supply primary schools with fresh fruit per year.

⁵⁶ [Letter](#) – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 30th October 2024

⁵⁷ [Transcript](#) – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 11th October 2024

The Panel is also unclear why the breakdown screenshot provided above includes a removal of the proposed costs of extending meals up to the age of 18 as previous funding was for primary school meals only. In the public hearing on 11th October, the Panel was advised that a free school meal provision at Secondary schools might be considered in 2025, once the roll out had completed across primary schools⁵⁸.

The Panel noted that the cost across the four-year Budget period remained the same and asked whether any increase in funding requirement was anticipated. The Panel was advised that the Government was confident in the figures due to the piloting nature of the programme has provided confidence about costs⁵⁹.

The Panel looks forward to receiving further information about the school meals programme in 2025.

Investing in Lifelong Learning and Future Skills Provision

The Government proposes the following revenue expenditure growth for this over the next Budget period:

2025	2026	2027	2028
£1,158,000	£1,544,000	£1,882,000	£2,209,000

The Panel asked for further information about this additional revenue expenditure and was advised that this was largely driven by the outcome of the proposition ‘Update of Higher Education Funding’ [[P.12/2024](#)] which had been approved, as amended, by the Assembly in March 2024.

The Minister provided the following details in a public hearing on 11th October 2024:

We are going to make some announcements soon about distance learning, which will come with a cost. There are some costs in the apprenticeship programme that come from some really practical things.⁶⁰

The Panel identified that £500,000 of this additional funding for 2025 will be used in reaction to apprenticeships, however, as highlighted by the Panel’s amendment to the Government Plan (number 5) this funding would largely be used to support increased requirements and costs of existing schemes rather than driving improvements. For further comments please see the report accompanying the Panel’s amendment ([here](#)).

In response to queries about whether the Government had plans to increase the postgraduate funding bursary as part of this additional funding, the MELL advised:

That is not a priority we have at the moment. I would love to do that, but that is not a priority we have at the moment. We have got to deal with the distance learning. Again, it was pretty much determined by P.12 as it came through, and we have got to react to that because we said we would, and we amended it appropriately, I believe. We will deal with distance learning as well. I think we

⁵⁸ [Transcript](#) – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 11th October 2024

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ Ibid

have got some plans coming forward from that which are very good, and also the increases to the thresholds for main grants⁶¹.

The Student Loan Support Group Jersey provided the Panel with a submission to its review, with a particular interest in this additional revenue funding and wider funding for student finance support. The submission can be read in full [here](#). The submission highlighted the sparse detail available for this CSP commitment funding and also that there were a number of persistent issues raised with them by members of the public around student finance. The Panel may explore these further in 2025.

Other matters

The Panel also wishes to comment on some matters that it feels are absent from the proposed Budget, for example, the lack of funding provided for play spaces and play strategies (for example the removal of funding for ‘Field Development and Play Space’ that was previously being developed under a grouped HoE for CYPES.

Also, the proposed Budget references having a “focus on the cost of living” and states (on page 23) that measures to support Islanders with the cost of living include freezing duty on alcohol and fuel. However, the Panel suggests that there is little to connect this with the [Children, Young People and Families Plan’s](#) big picture outcome ambition to ensure that all children in Jersey enjoy a decent standard of living and specifically address measures to support children living in poverty.

Conclusion

The Panel summarises its findings and recommendations as follows:

Findings:

1. Funding previously transferred from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund for various capital projects, e.g. the Firearms Range, Prison Improvement works and Dewberry House, will be carried forward to progress these projects in 2025 and no further transfers of funding for them will be made from the COCF in 2025.
2. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs advised that funding from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund may be used to fund laptops for Honorary Police forces, but this transfer request has not been included in the Budget.
3. Island youth projects have been reprioritised and reprofiled, to develop a centre at the former Ann Street Brewery site in St Helier earlier, but this has had the consequence of delaying the improvements to the youth centre at Le Squez and Samarès School.
4. The major project at Mont à Labbé Secondary has been extended, with an increased total estimated expenditure of £41 million (previous approval was for £23 million).

⁶¹ [Transcript](#) – Public Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 11th October 2024, p.8

5. The major project for a joint Ambulance, Fire and Rescue Headquarters may be changed to provide for separate headquarter facilities for each of the services, however, the timescale has been extended to 2028 which will mean that there are increased maintenance costs for the existing buildings. The MJHA has also advised that there is a possibility that both services and the school could remain situated in the Rouge Bouillion area.
6. The split of the Heads of Expenditure for CYPES was done in a “hurry” and the Council of Ministers has subsequently lodged an amendment to the Budget to move approximately £5.8 million from Children and Families budget to Education and Lifelong Learning.
7. The proposed Budget does not clearly identify areas or show support to the third sector or not for profit industry, for example where grants are provided by departments to charities to provide services.
8. Savings targets within the Departments for JHA, SoJP and CYPES are lower for 2025 than for 2024. In 2024 departments had been given equal percentage savings targets, but these had been varied for 2025.
9. States of Jersey Police are facing significant cost pressures, some examples provided to the Panel was a cost to access a Home Office database rising by 102% since 2021 and software costs for the Digital Forensics Unit.
10. There have been changes and cancellations of some projects that were being progressed under CYPES grouped Heads of Expenditure for ‘Upgrades to CYPES Estates’, for example the cancellation for the Music Development project.
11. The Government is providing £700,000 of funding to create a housing provision for 16–19-year-olds in a property that is already in Government ownership.
12. ‘New School and Educational Developments’ is the grouped Head of Expenditure that will see the projects of the new town school (Gas Place) and the new St Helier youth centre (Ann Street site) be developed however no specific breakdown of the proposed funding between the projects has been provided as part of this Budget review.
13. There continue to be delays to capital projects that have been ongoing for years, for example the Army and Sea Cadet Headquarters and Ambulance, Fire and Rescue Headquarters. These projects are waiting on other assessments and reviews to complete and decisions to be made in order to make progress, however, the Panel is concerned about the costs incurred from the uncertainty and feasibility work being unused.
14. As part of the Common Strategic Policy focus, the Government is prioritising additional revenue expenditure for Early Years pilots in order to test how the Early Years nursery and childcare provision could be extended, and three pilot schemes were running from September 2024 and would continue into 2025. There have been a number of concerns raised by external stakeholders about the Ministers plans and how they will impact the wider Early Years sector.

15. The Panel will seek further clarification about the breakdown of funding related to the additional revenue expenditure to fund school meals. Annual staff costs appear to make up £588,000 of the proposed Budget and the cost of providing primary schools with fresh fruit will be £163,000 per year.
16. £500,000 of the additional funding for lifelong learning and skills for 2025 is to support apprenticeships. Further detail is required on the remaining breakdown of the funding for the Budget period.

Recommendations:

1. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs should publish all costs of feasibility work that has been undertaken for the Ambulance Fire and Rescue Headquarters major project to date.
2. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning and the Minister for Children and Families should share details with Scrutiny about the utilisation of funding in the Office of the Chief Officer for CYPES, including how this is split between the remits of Education and Lifelong Learning and Children and Families.
3. In future years, the Budget could provide further detail about how Government grant funding will be used to support the third sector, particularly any funding provided for the provision of essential services to show the importance of this sector to the community and show a connection with Government provided funding.
4. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should revise the engagement with key stakeholders in the Early Years sector and share outcomes and updates about the pilots and future plans with Scrutiny.
5. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should publish details of the contingency plans in place related to the capacity issues at Mont à Labbé School to provide assurance that all children will receive the opportunity of education in a school for the academic year 2025-6 and beyond.
6. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should review the accessibility of all post-16 courses (to include consideration of the flexibility of delivery) and, also, the financial support and grants provided for higher education.
7. Further details should be published by the Minister for Children and Families and the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning about how the delays to the major project at Le Squez will impact the Youth Service and Samarès School, including any mitigating measures that have been put in place in the interim.

The Panel would like to thank all parties who have contributed to its review of the Budget.

The Panel will write to all of the Ministers who have engaged with the Panel's review to follow up on these Comments and ask for any response to the Panel's recommendations.