

# STATES OF JERSEY



**DRAFT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL  
PLAN ADDITION FOR 2017 – 2019  
(P.68/2016) – SEVENTH AMENDMENT  
(P.68/2016 Amd.(7)) – COMMENTS  
(P.68/2016 Amd.(7)Com.) – ADDENDUM**

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Presented to the States on 27th September 2016  
by the Council of Ministers

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**STATES GREFFE**

## ADDENDUM TO COMMENTS

**Following the withdrawal of Amendment 13, lodged by the Connétable of St. Saviour, the Council of Ministers would like to explain what it proposes to do for Jèrriais.**

**The Council would have opposed the Amendment as drafted.**

**Ministers believe an alternative approach to support Jèrriais is now possible and preferable.**

The Council of Ministers has made difficult decisions while formulating the Medium Term Financial Plan Addition, focusing available funds on priority areas like health and social care, improving educational standards, and essential infrastructure.

The plan reprioritises expenditure, allocating it where it is needed most, and delivering savings and efficiencies elsewhere.

The serious concerns about the future of Jèrriais have only recently received publicity. There is now a better understanding of these issues.

Preserving a language, its historic importance and relevance to the future, will always be a difficult issue when allocating finite resources.

Nevertheless, the Council recognises that the government has a responsibility to help secure this language for future generations, while recognising that there is room for debate on how we should achieve this.

It is important to be clear on the recent budget changes and transfers. In January 2016, the Education Department transferred the whole budget for both Sport and Culture to what is now the Department of Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture (“EDTS&C”), including the full amount of £147,400 for the Don Balleine Trust, which funds l’Office du Jèrriais. This placed responsibilities for culture, and Jèrriais, with EDTS&C.

However, before this transfer of functions, savings had been explored, including an option to reduce the annual grant funding for Jèrriais by £29,000. It was agreed prior to the transfer by the Council of Ministers that this saving would be implemented, a decision which EDTS&C included in its MTFP Addition submission. Therefore, the grant to the Trust was reduced by £29,000 by EDTS&C. This was done in the context of this Medium Term Financial Plan Addition, which has had to secure sustainable public finances while funding services agreed as priorities in the States Strategic Plan.

Appreciating the challenges in supporting Jèrriais, including imminent retirements at the Bureau de Jèrriais, the Chief Minister’s Department will now identify additional funding to support and expand the teaching of Jèrriais. This will be done with a minimum of 2 full-time teachers, and hopefully a third to be funded by the private sector or voluntary donations.

The funding will likely be identified by a further re-profiling of the Chief Minister’s Department budget.

There is clearly support for Jèrriais, and strenuous efforts will also be made to identify private sources to support the lead given by government to support Jèrriais. The government will be looking for a wider solution to secure the language's future.

This approach will enable 2 teachers to be funded during the life of the Medium Term Financial Plan. These teachers need to be Jèrriais speakers and professional teachers, which means recruiting professional teachers and providing further training to teach them Jèrriais. This will take time, and there are limits in the life of the MTFP on how many teachers can be identified. As such, 2 teachers seems reasonable at this juncture.

If we are to re-invigorate our language, we need to both teach our children and embed Jèrriais into Island life. This is the wider challenge. Students who learn a language in a vacuum will not continue to use it unless it has a purpose or resonance outside of school. As a community, we need to seize this challenge.

Noting all the above, the Council of Ministers asks the Assembly to accept the approach outlined above as a more appropriate means of expanding support for Jèrriais.

### **Financial and manpower implications**

If approved, this Amendment would result in additional savings of £30,000 to other education services, all of which are under financial pressure, and would have an impact on children's education.