

STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED GOVERNMENT PLAN 2024- 2027 (P.72/2023): TWENTY-THIRD AMENDMENT

NEW SPORTS FACILITIES AT LE ROCQUIER SCHOOL

Lodged au Greffe on 27th November 2023
by Deputy S.G. Luce of Grouville and St. Martin

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSED GOVERNMENT PLAN 2024-2027 (P.72/2023): TWENTY-THIRD AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (g) –

After the words “Summary Table 4 to the report” insert the words –

“, except that in Summary Table 4 a new line entitled ‘Le Rocquier Sports Facilities’ should be inserted and £7,700,000 allocated as the ‘Total Project Approval’, with subsequent lines in the Table amended accordingly”.

2 PAGE 3, PARAGRAPH (h) –

After the words “Appendix 2 – Summary Tables 5(i) and (ii) of the Report” insert the words –

“, except that, in order that funds may be allocated to commence a 3-year project to provide new sports facilities at Le Rocquier School, including a new sports centre and outdoor pitches –

- (i) in Summary Table 5(i) the line entitled ‘Central Reserve’ should be decreased by £3,300,000; and
- (ii) in Summary Table 5(ii) the line entitled ‘Upgrades to CYPES Estates’ should be decreased by £4,400,000”.

DEPUTY S.G. LUCE OF GROUVILLE AND ST. MARTIN

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to receive the Government Plan 2024 – 2027 specified in Article 9(1) of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 (“the Law”) and specifically –

- (a) to approve the estimate of total States income to be paid into the Consolidated Fund in 2024 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 1 to the Report, which is inclusive of the proposed taxation and impôts duties changes outlined in the Government Plan, in line with Article 9(2)(a) of the Law;
- (b) to refer to their Act dated 30th September 2016 and to approve the application of existing resources for work on the development of ‘user pays’ charges in relation to all aspects of waste, including commercial and domestic liquid and solid waste;
- (c) to approve the proposed Changes to Approval for financing/borrowing for 2024, as shown in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 2 to the Report, which may be obtained by the Minister for Treasury and Resources, as and when required, in line with Article 9 (2)(c) of the Law, of up to those revised approvals;

- (d) to approve the extension of the use of the existing Revolving Credit Facility to include the provision of funds that would otherwise be implemented through bank overdraft or bank overdraft facilities under Article 26 (1)(a) of the Law, should they be needed, subject to the limits outlined in that article;
- (e) to approve the transfers from one States fund to another for 2024 of up to and including the amounts set in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 3 in line with Article 9(2)(b) of the Law;
- (f) to approve a transfer from the Consolidated Fund to the Stabilisation Fund in 2024 of up to £25 million, subject to a decision of the Minister for Treasury and Resources based on the availability of funds in the Consolidated Fund as at 31 December 2023 in excess of the estimates provided in this plan, or from budgeted underspends identified before 31 December 2024;
- (g) to approve each major project that is to be started or continued in 2024 and the total cost of each such project and any amendments to the proposed total cost of a major project under a previously approved Government Plan, in line with Article 9(2)(d), (e) and (f) of the Law and as set out in Appendix 2 - Summary Table 4 to the Report, except that in Summary Table 4 a new line entitled ‘Le Rocquier Sports Facilities’ should be inserted and £7,700,000 allocated as the ‘Total Project Approval’, with subsequent lines in the Table amended accordingly;
- (h) to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from the Consolidated Fund for 2024, for each Head of Expenditure, being gross expenditure less estimated income (if any), in line with Articles 9(2)(g), 10(1) and 10(2) of the Law, and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Tables 5(i) and (ii) of the Report, except that, in order that funds may be allocated to commence a 3-year project to provide new sports facilities at Le Rocquier School, including a new sports centre –
 - (i) in Summary Table 5(i) the line entitled ‘Central Reserve’ should be decreased by £3,300,000; and
 - (ii) in Summary Table 5(ii) the line entitled ‘Upgrades to CYPES Estates’ should be decreased by £4,400,000;
- (i) to approve the estimated income, being estimated gross income less expenditure, that each States trading operation will pay into its trading fund in 2024 in line with Article 9(2)(h) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 6 to the Report;
- (j) to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from each States trading operation’s trading fund for 2024 for each head of expenditure in line with Article 9(2)(i) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 7 to the Report;

- (k) to approve the estimated income and expenditure proposals for the Climate Emergency Fund for 2024 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 8 to the Report; and
- (l) to approve, in accordance with Article 9(1) of the Law, the Government Plan 2024-2027, as set out at Appendix 3 to the Report.

REPORT

When Le Rocquier school was rebuilt and opened in 2006, the decision was taken not to replace the original sports facilities situated next to the school. Today, seventeen years after the development of Le Rocquier school, the PE department there continues to function from the original 1970's sports block.

The age and condition of the existing facilities are well beyond the expected lifespan, and a recent survey has identified significant capital investment is required just to keep the doors open. In other words, we cannot continue as we are.

The current facilities are also extremely limited in capacity and do not provide the range and scope required to deliver core PE and GCSE PE across five-year groups. The school role will grow significantly in the next few years due to population growth and the baby boom, which is currently working through primary schools. We know there is a huge increase in demand coming down the proverbial road, but we are doing nothing about it.

While there is a massive issue around the provision (or lack of provision) for the east of the Island, the main problem here, today, is the health and safety of the students at le Rocquier School. The Sports Hall is a 1970's construction and is in a dangerous condition. The female changing rooms are upstairs with no lift. These poor-quality facilities do not meet basic standards and the current disability law. This is just unacceptable in this day and age.

The condition of the existing indoor and outdoor sports spaces also means there is little opportunity for maximising community use. Clubs and Associations are not using the outside spaces due to poor surface standards. A new outdoor 3G pitch, and netball courts, would provide an invaluable community facility in the east. The FA Football Pitch strategy has identified the need for two additional full size football pitches, and this will provide one of these.

The pitch and courts would also be open to the community evenings, weekend and holidays and could provide a much-needed sporting facility in the east of the island. The project would be delivered to meet the needs of the school but would also be the first new facility delivered as part of the Inspiring Active Places Strategy.

The pitch may attract up to 50% match funding from the Football Trust, but this cannot be agreed until planning consent is in place.

The government plan in 2024 originally identified funding of £4.4m to refurbish the school sports facilities, and circa £3.3m to provide outdoor facilities. This "outdoor project" would be to construct a full-size artificial football/rugby pitch and two outdoor netball courts with sun and rain cover. These outdoor facilities are essential, and absolutely required to support the school's delivery of curriculum PE but will also be available to the community out with school hours.

These outdoor facilities need to be constructed in advance of any refurbishment/new build of the existing and aging sports block at the school to ensure the school can deliver some form of PE during construction.

However, the funding of £4.4m would not be sufficient to undertake the extensive work required to make the existing facility usable, as once it was initially refurbished it would still not meet the curriculum requirements. While this amount of money is not insignificant, why spent it if it doesn't "do the job" that is required? What is required is £29.8m (spent over 3 years) and that a point would provide proper facilities.

I would also like Members to consider how vital this is to the community not just St. Clement but the entire of the East of the Island. This is an area that has been overlooked for far too many years as far as sports facilities are concerned. The eastern parishes desperately need more, and better, sporting facilities. We saw evidence of what can happen when the recently build Padel Tennis Centre was completed. That project immediately attracted a tremendous following, and also provided local schools with an opportunity to try and enjoy a new sport. We saw the same with the Table Tennis Centre that has recently produced a British Champion in Hannah Silcock. When we provide the right facilities, our local sportsmen and sportswomen (young and not so young) continue to show that our small Island can punch well above its weight.

The Government are apparently looking at an elite sports programme, well there's little point in having one if we don't have the facilities. However, from a social need this Le Rocquier scheme is also an enormously important project. The late Constable Len Norman was tremendously concerned that the large-scale building of housing in the Parish, coupled with no plans to enhance the amenities, was a recipe for disaster. We have had the much-needed housing delivered, but we now need to deliver the facilities and amenities that are required (and now desperately needed) for the local, and new, community.

There is currently no mention of Le Rocquier School in this year's government plan, however on page 66 there is a breakdown of the grouped head of expenditure for CYPES in Table 23. It mentions that this is for a "broader range of needs" and has the "flexibility to reprioritise" where needed. In this table, it shows that CYPES have allocated £5.764m next year to "Schools Improvements." However, without any specifics, it is impossible to know where this money will go if it will at all!

There is also a 2024 estimate of £10,721 in Summary Table 5(ii) (on page 107) that is allocated to "Upgrades to CYPES estates." Again, what is this for? We need specified projects that we know for certain will be delivered.

What is required for the project at Le Rocquier is as follows. £7.67m in 2024, £11.1m in 2025, and £10.9m to complete the project in 2026. Members will be rightly asking "what would the project deliver for that money?". The answer is a Sports Hall (big enough for eight badminton/netball courts), a fitness gym, a multi-purpose studio, changing rooms, classrooms, PE staff accommodation, and finally a dance studio and outdoors a full-size football pitch and two netball courts. This is not a "nice to have" list, it is an absolute necessity to provide the basic requirements for La Rocquier School and the east of the Island. Fort Regent is no longer an option.... we need to provide these facilities elsewhere.

Some Members will ask if there is a public demand for this upgraded facility at Le Rocquier. The public consultation carried out following the publication of IAP (Inspiring Active Places) was highly supportive of developing new provisions in the East. Over 75% of respondents identified the need to provide a modern sports facility for the East of the island, and this percentage increased to 89% if we extract the views

of residents living in the East of the island. 70% of respondents agreed that the Le Rocquier site is a good location.

What we need is to design and construct a Dual Use Sports Centre at le Rocquier School. This will service the school's needs, and the community's needs, ensuring islanders of all ages have access to inspiring places to be active. This facility can be constructed and open by Q4 2026. Use of the facility by the school and the community contributes to the CSP seven priorities for change. Completing this project will address the lack of indoor sports facilities in the East of the island and provide a long-term improvement in the quality and range of sports facilities in Jersey. The new Sport Centre will serve the school and the local community.

Le Rocquier Sport Centre will contribute to the "Inspiring an Active Jersey" vision to increase physical activity. There will be a consequent increase in physical activity by pupils, staff, and the community. We will see new sports clubs forming as more access to quality sports facilities becomes available.

This project will address the poor school sports facility, and its provision as a dual use sporting facility will allow the school and community to thrive. The outcome will be that the school will have access to a "fit for purpose" range of facilities, and also offer extensive after school programme of activities. Local sports clubs will offer more opportunities to be active for those living in the east of Island.

Finally, I would point out that we have been told in recent weeks that the Island is facing a shortage of large-scale construction projects. This project would provide and maintain jobs as well as providing some continuity and consistency for the building trades. Government have been consistently criticised by the Fiscal Policy Panel for not spending enough on capital projects. Here is a wonderful opportunity to deliver a much needed and overdue scheme that benefits not just the children of Le Rocquier School but the whole of the east of the Island.

Financial and staffing implications

The staffing requirements are not extensive for this project. This is because a great deal of the work required has already been done.

The finance requirements are as follows –

- (i) 2024 - for the outdoor facilities take £3.3m from the Central reserve, reducing its overall expenditure and seen in Table 5(i) on page 106. (The Central reserve is used to "provide advance funding for urgent expenditure in the public interest"), and for the initial work on the indoor facilities allocate £4.4m from the CYPES Upgrade to Schools Estates expenditure.
- (ii) 2025 - for ongoing work on the indoor facilities allocate £11.1m from the Consolidated Fund to the project.
- (iii) 2026 - for the final stages of the indoor facilities allocate £10.9m (or whatever balance is required) from the Consolidated Fund to cover the final balance of the project.