

STATES OF JERSEY

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2006 TO 2011 (P.40/2006): AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 16th May 2006
by Senator J.L. Perchard

STATES GREFFE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2006 TO 2011 (P.40/2006): AMENDMENT

After the word “Appendix” insert the words –

“, except that,

(a) in Commitment Three, Outcome 3.3, after Action 3.3.3 insert the following actions –

3.3.4 Develop programmes for the education and rehabilitation of prisoners in 2007. (HA)

3.3.5 Increase access to vocational and academic education to prisoners leading to recognised qualifications, in addition to providing opportunities to address offending behaviour in 2007. (HA)”,

and renumber the remaining Actions accordingly.

SENATOR J.L. PERCHARD

REPORT

I begin my report by quoting from the most recent HM Chief Inspector of Prisons report on La Moye Prison; section 5.1–

5.1 There had been some very limited progress since the last inspection but, overall, the range and quality of education provision remained wholly inadequate. The curriculum was impoverished, with most learners offered no more than one or two hours of education a week. Staffing levels were insufficient to meet the identified need. Library provision was poor.

Introduction

Any strategy to reduce re-offending must have at its heart the obvious duty on the part of the Government to protect citizens from crime and to act against those who break the law. Sentences must ensure that offenders are punished for their crimes. They must also be robust and efficiently enforced, so that they deter would-be criminals.

However, punishment and deterrence are not enough in themselves. The State also has a role to play in addressing problems that can lead some people into crime and to reduce the level of re-offending. Substance abuse, poor housing or broken relationships, low skills leading to a lack of employment opportunities can be major obstacles to an offender living free of crime and becoming a more productive member of society.

My amendments are presented as I believe we must recognise and address the high level of re-offending. The large numbers of people in prison and serving community sentences are a huge burden on the prison and probation services, society and the taxpayer. Released prisoners are more likely to re-offend than they are to avoid crime.

While many factors undoubtedly contribute to re-offending, offenders and ex-offenders tend to have skills levels well below those of the general population and are much more likely to be unemployed. Yet sustained employment is a key to leading a crime-free life. I believe that improving skills will help move offenders into jobs and break the cycle of re-offending.

When debating the Draft Strategic Plan we have an opportunity that should be viewed, not only as an investment in society, but as a sound financial investment, after all it costs approximately £41,000 to detain each prisoner at La Moye.

The Prison Governor has advised me that he would be enthusiastic to release statistics that would provide information to enable the measurement of re-offending of prisoners released from La Moye, so that the impact of any investment would be measurable on a year-by-year basis.

What should Prison education deliver?

Prison education should be an integral part of the life of the prison and should play a major role in a co-ordinated approach to rehabilitating offenders back into society. A prison education service should work closely with other specialist services, including drug counselling, psychologist, prison probation officer and other staff involved in sentence planning. In a report the House of Commons Select Committee on Education and Skills wrote –

“Prison education should be part of a wider approach to reduce recidivism through the rehabilitation of prisoners. Although contributing to the reduction of recidivism is of key importance, prison education is more than just this. It is also important to deliver education in prisons because it is the right thing to do”.

Specifically, prison education should provide the following services –

- assessment of the learning needs of prisoners;

- develop learning plans for prisoners as part of an overall sentence plan;
- link learning to other activities in the prison such as workshops, library, kitchens, gardens etc., and providing opportunities for skills in these environments to be assessed towards nationally recognised qualifications;
- develop vocational options, to enhance employability;
- link to the offending behaviour programmes, specifically those related to drug abuse;
- provide opportunities to improve skills in literacy, numeracy and with information technology;
- offer opportunities to study for nationally recognised qualifications that can contribute to improving a prisoner's employability and self-esteem;
- provide progression advice to encourage prisoners to continue with learning on their release from prison;
- work with the Careers Service; who will provide guidance and advice on careers and job opportunities.

Financial and manpower implications

La Moye is a small but complex establishment. Staff who work there need to work in a flexible way. Thus, any additional staff who may be employed (if the service were to be operated by the States) would need to have a wide range of responsibilities crossing different areas involved with the rehabilitation of prisoners. There is already a degree of education at the prison, but to make a real and meaningful impact on the level of re-offending, an enhanced budget needs to be established to develop an integrated approach to the education, learning and skills needed by prisoners. The annual costs of such a programme have been calculated using salary and other costs as at April 2006.

	Appointment from ESC
Prison Education Learning and Skills Co-ordinator	
Learning Support Tutor, Main grade lecturer at UP5	£ 41,000
Payment for part-time tutors estimated at 15 hours per week over 50 weeks a year	£ 24,000
Skills Tutor	£ 35,000
Drug Tutor	£ 35,000
Offending Behaviour Worker	£ 35,000
Psychological Assistant	£ 30,000
Administrative Assistant	£ 28,000
Careers Advisor ½ day per week	£ 3,500
Non-Staff costs	£ 25,000
TOTAL	£256,500

TOTAL of six full-time equivalent employees would be required if the service is provided by the States