

# STATES OF JERSEY

## OFFICIAL REPORT

**TUESDAY, 15th DECEMBER 2020**

<b>QUESTIONS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. Questions to Ministers without notice .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin: .....	4
Deputy R.J. Renouf of St. Ouen (The Minister for Health and Social Services):.....	4
1.1.1 The Deputy of St. Martin: .....	4
1.2 Senator K.L. Moore: .....	5
The Deputy of St. Ouen: .....	5
1.2.1 Senator K.L. Moore: .....	5
1.3 Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour: .....	5
Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré (The Chief Minister): .....	5
1.3.1 Deputy K.G. Pamplin: .....	6
1.4 Senator S.Y. Mézec: .....	6
The Deputy of St. Ouen: .....	6
1.4.1 Senator S.Y. Mézec: .....	7
1.5 Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier: .....	7
Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré: .....	7
1.5.1 Deputy R.J. Ward: .....	7
1.6 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier: .....	8
Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré: .....	8
1.6.1 Deputy I. Gardiner: .....	8
1.7 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier: .....	8
The Deputy of St. Ouen: .....	8
1.7.1 Deputy C.S. Alves: .....	9
1.8 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence: .....	9
Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré: .....	9
1.8.1 Deputy K.F. Morel: .....	10
1.9 Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier: .....	10
Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré: .....	10
1.9.1 Deputy M.R. Higgins: .....	11
1.10 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade: .....	11
Senator T.A. Vallois (The Minister for Education): .....	11
1.10.1 Deputy M. Tadier: .....	11
1.11 Deputy J.H. Perchard of St. Saviour: .....	12
Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré: .....	12
1.11.1 Deputy J.H. Perchard: .....	12
1.12 Deputy T. Pointon of St. John: .....	13
Senator T.A. Vallois: .....	13
1.12.1 The Deputy of St. John: .....	13
1.13 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour: .....	13

The Deputy of St. Ouen: .....	13
1.13.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet: .....	13
1.14 Senator S.C. Ferguson: .....	13
The Deputy of St. Ouen: .....	14
1.14.1 Senator S.C. Ferguson: .....	14
1.15 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier: .....	15
Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré: .....	15
1.15.1 Deputy G.P. Southern: .....	15
Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré: .....	15
1.16 Deputy G.J. Truscott of St. Brelade: .....	16
The Deputy of St. Ouen: .....	16
1.16.1 Deputy G.J. Truscott: .....	16
1.17 Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier: .....	16
Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré: .....	16
1.17.1 Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat: .....	16
1.18 Senator S.W. Pallett .....	17
Senator L.J. Farnham (The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture): .....	17
1.18.1 Senator S.W. Pallett: .....	17

**PUBLIC BUSINESS – resumption ..... 17**

**2. Government Plan 2021–2024 (P.130/2020): twentieth amendment (P.130/2020 Amd.(20))..... 17**

2.1 Deputy M.R. Higgins: .....	18
2.1.1 Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement: .....	20
2.1.2 Senator S.C. Ferguson: .....	21
2.1.3 Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat: .....	21
2.1.4 Connétable C.H. Taylor of St. John: .....	22
2.1.5 Deputy M. Tadier: .....	22
2.1.6 Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary: .....	23
2.1.7 Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour: .....	24
2.1.8 Deputy G.P. Southern: .....	24
2.1.9 Senator S.W. Pallett: .....	25
2.1.10 Connétable J. Le Bailly of St. Mary: .....	26
2.1.11 Deputy M.R. Higgins: .....	26

**2.2 Government Plan 2021-2024 (P.130/2020) ninth amendment (P.130/2020 Amd.(9)).. 29**

2.2.1 Deputy R.J. Ward: .....	30
2.2.2 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier: .....	31
2.2.3 Senator S.Y. Mézec: .....	31
2.2.4 Deputy K.F. Morel: .....	32
2.2.5 Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier: .....	32
2.2.6 Deputy K.C. Lewis: .....	33
2.2.7 Deputy L.B.E. Ash of St. Clement: .....	34
2.2.8 Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour: .....	35
2.2.9 The Connétable of St. John: .....	36
2.2.10 Deputy G.P. Southern: .....	36
2.2.11 Connétable R.A. Buchanan of St. Ouen: .....	36
2.2.12 Deputy S.J. Pinel of St. Clement: .....	37
2.2.13 Deputy M. Tadier: .....	37

<b>LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT PROPOSED .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT.....</b>	<b>39</b>
2.2.14 The Deputy of St. Martin: .....	39
2.2.15 Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:.....	40
2.2.16 Senator T.A. Vallois:.....	42
2.2.17 Deputy R.E. Huelin of St. Peter: .....	43
2.2.18 Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade:.....	43
2.2.19 Deputy R.J. Ward: .....	44
<b>2.3 Government Plan 2021–2024 (P.130/2020): fifteenth amendment (P.130/2020 Amd. (15)) .....</b>	<b>48</b>
2.3.1 Senator K.L. Moore: .....	48
2.3.2 Senator S.Y. Mézec: .....	49
2.3.3 The Deputy of St. Martin: .....	50
2.3.4 The Connétable of St. Mary:.....	50
2.3.5 Deputy R.J. Ward: .....	50
2.3.6 Deputy S.A. Pinel: .....	50
2.3.7 Deputy G.P. Southern: .....	51
2.3.8 Deputy J.H. Young: .....	52
2.3.9 Senator S.C. Ferguson: .....	53
2.3.10 Deputy M. Tadier: .....	54
2.3.11 Deputy J.A. Martin:.....	55
2.3.12 Deputy S.M. Wickenden of St. Helier: .....	55
2.3.13 The Deputy of St. Mary: .....	56
2.3.14 Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:.....	56
2.3.15 Deputy K.F. Morel: .....	57
2.3.16 Connétable R. Vibert of St. Peter:.....	57
2.3.17 The Deputy of St. Peter:.....	58
2.3.18 Senator K.L. Moore:.....	58
<b>2.4 Government Plan 2021-2024 (P.130/2020): eighteenth amendment (P.130/2020 Amd.(18)).....</b>	<b>60</b>
2.4.1 Deputy R.J. Ward: .....	60
2.4.2 Senator T.A. Vallois: .....	62
2.4.3 Senator S.Y. Mézec: .....	63
2.4.4 Deputy J.M. Maçon: .....	64
2.4.5 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet: .....	67
2.4.6 Senator S.W. Pallett: .....	68
2.4.7 Deputy G.P. Southern: .....	69
2.4.8 Deputy M. Tadier:.....	69
2.4.9 Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré: .....	70
2.4.10 Deputy I. Gardiner: .....	70
2.4.11 Deputy J.H. Perchard: .....	71
2.4.12 Deputy K.F. Morel: .....	72
2.4.13 Deputy J.A. Martin:.....	73
2.4.14 Deputy R.J. Ward: .....	73
<b>ADJOURNMENT.....</b>	<b>76</b>

[9:30]

**The Roll was called and the Dean led the Assembly in Prayer.**

## **QUESTIONS**

### **1. Questions to Ministers without notice**

#### **The Bailiff:**

The next matter on the Order Paper scheduled for this morning is questions without notice to all Ministers on the matter of COVID-19 for which I will allow an hour. If Members would indicate in the usual way in the chat whether they wish to ask a question and also which Minister they wish to pose the question to; otherwise the default position will be the question will be posed to the Chief Minister who may delegate it to an appropriate Minister, if that is the right thing to do. I will call upon Members asking a first question and then if time allows I will go back and call Members who have indicated they wish to ask a second or subsequent question in those particular orders. Now the first one is the Deputy of St. Martin, a question for the Minister for Health and Social Services.

#### **1.1 Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin:**

The Minister for Health and Social Services will be aware that those individuals with Down Syndrome are particularly at risk of premature death if they catch COVID, some, in fact, 6 times more at risk. Some Down Syndrome individuals within our community are in registered care facilities and are about to receive the first dose of the vaccine. However, other Down Syndrome individuals within our community live in unregistered care facilities and some in family environments and they are not expected to receive the vaccine until much later in the new year. Will the Minister in the first instance give an undertaking to reconsider so that all Down Syndrome people are included in the first phase of the vaccine rollout and will he give further consideration to others within our community with learning disabilities so that they are also included at a very early stage?

#### **Deputy R.J. Renouf of St. Ouen (The Minister for Health and Social Services):**

I have referred this question to officers for consideration, and for advising me in the light of emails received over the weekend, but I do wish to reassure the Deputy and others that the question of vulnerability has been very carefully considered, not just at local level but nationally. All groups have been assessed, their vulnerability to the disease has been thought through and the efficacy of the vaccine in each case. What has come through as a result of this national work and, indeed I think, internationally is that the greatest vulnerability is age. When you combine age with communal living that is the reason why care homes have been selected first throughout the country as the recipients of the first batches of the vaccine. At Les Amis, residents in their communal homes have also been included in that and then there has been a very careful graduation of vulnerabilities in tiers, and that has been publicised previously. Vulnerable adults thus far, the plan is nationally for them to be vaccinated after the persons who are aged 70 and over, I believe. But that is constantly under review and we will follow the recommendations of the national body, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation. I hope that helps the Deputy.

#### **1.1.1 The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I thank the Minister for his answer but these individuals are among the most vulnerable within our society. We are judged on how we look after the vulnerable within our society and in many cases the only difference is that some of them are in registered care homes and some in other environments, there is no other fundamental difference. So I would ask the Minister not to worry about the national guidance but to think about the local guidance that he steers and to make decisions accordingly.

#### **The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I think it is important to have regard to the national guidance. These matters have been considered very carefully, there are a lot of vulnerabilities. If we could suddenly magic up 100,000 vials of vaccine, wonderful, and get it done all on the same day, wonderful, but to say that one group is more vulnerable than the other is so very difficult for us. The Deputy says that the people he is talking about are among the most vulnerable; well, I have had other emails saying that other groups are among the most vulnerable. So, what we are trying to do is to follow a system that has been put in place as a result of very careful consideration by many medical minds as to the best way of dealing with COVID in a population.

## **1.2 Senator K.L. Moore:**

I would like to address my question to the Minister for Health and Social Services also, please. Minister, could you tell us what the R rate is today for the Island, please?

### **The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I have not a calculation of the R rate for today. The last calculation I received it was in a range of 1.6 to 2.

#### **1.2.1 Senator K.L. Moore:**

That rate is at least 2 weeks' old. Why does the Minister not ask for a more up-to-date figure so that he can base his questions on it?

### **The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

The calculation of the R rate is complex and requires a great deal of officer time. It is done when necessary. We have many other data sources such as the positivity rate, which is of interest and seems to be far lower than many other jurisdictions around us.

## **1.3 Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour:**

My question to the Chief Minister is: the 40-day number of cases per 100,000 population has gone up again to 758.8. There are now confirmed 31 cases in care homes, 24 still in the hospital and some we know are very critical. What is the Chief Minister waiting for and when will he announce when decisions will change based on the current information that we are seeing daily in real time?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré (The Chief Minister):**

I thank the Deputy for his question because I know it is going to be one on the minds of many people and, unfortunately, it is a slightly long answer. It is a similar answer to the one we gave out to everybody at the beginning of last week. It is saying that we have got to remember again in Jersey we are testing more and more people and so the number of tests is going up exponentially. To give an example, last week I was saying that we tested 10,000 people, I think in the week before, and at that point we had identified around an extra 200 cases.

[9:45]

The analogy I was using was that in April, over a period of about 3 to 4 weeks, we had tested about 1,400 people and identified 200 positive cases roughly. In the week to date, we have tested 14,000 tests; that is a 40 per cent increase on the previous week. So the numbers that we are seeing and the increases in the numbers that we are seeing are influenced by the fact we are performing significantly more tests than anywhere else, certainly in our neighbourhood, and one of the highest levels globally. So, the actual measures - and this is important, this is a briefing that we had, myself and the Minister for Health and Social Services, last night, and absolutely we will be arranging, once we get out of the Government Plan, a full briefing for Members so they can ask these types of questions directly to the professionals - is one of the areas we keep, known as the hospitalisation rate with COVID, and, certainly as of last night it was about 5. Now, the reason I say that, and that is important, is in the U.K. (United Kingdom) for about 500 cases per 100,000 you expect to get about 25 cases in hospital.

We are getting 5 so that tends to imply that if we were to try to compare ourselves to the U.K. we would be at a level of about 100 positive cases that we were detecting for those 5 hospitalisation cases. We are showing 700. What that means it gives an indication of the scale of testing and how much more visible we are making the virus in Jersey compared to other jurisdictions, and that is what we have got to look at. In terms of the other part of his question, and this is very quick, is obviously what we are also waiting for is the measures that we introduced, for example, the hospitality lockdown, the gathering numbers and the 2-metre distancing. The hospitality lockdown only starts taking into effect towards probably the weekend. So what we are watching very carefully is what we think may be happening in the overall rates this week and then we will see if the measures we have already put in place will be starting to bite properly, let us say no earlier than this weekend.

**The Bailiff:**

Could I remind Members, I appreciate that some of the answers to these questions are large questions and will require substantial answers but those answering questions should try and keep to the one minute 30 seconds for an answer to the extent that that is possible. Thank you very much. Did you have a supplementary, Deputy Pamplin?

**1.3.1 Deputy K.G. Pamplin:**

I thank the Chief Minister for his answer. He is quite right to praise the assessing facilities and all the hard-working staff of this Island who have gone above and beyond but the point is the virus is very different to back in March. We are in winter, not in April and March, so the virus is acting differently. When will he get the updated medical advice that may change his mind? Because the worry is thinking may be a very different reality to what is happening to this variant version of the virus.

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

That is an easy answer. The last update that myself and the Minister for Health and Social Services had was yesterday evening and the advice was very much: "Keep calm and stick to the strategy that we are following." In other words, as of last night, their professional view was that we did not need to take any further measures at this stage, that we needed to see the outcome of the measures we have already put in place. Very, very clear and exactly, and probably slightly less eloquently, what I have just said in the earlier answer to the Deputy's question is what those professionals were saying to us, which is to put it into perspective, i.e., what we are doing in Jersey through an incredibly thorough contact-tracing regime and a testing regime, is making the virus a lot more visible than pretty well in any other jurisdiction globally. That is why we are able to take the strategy that we are following and we do need to keep to that strategy, certainly for the time being. Be under no illusion, if the advice changes, we will act on it. The advice to date has not changed.

**1.4 Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

On 2nd December, the Minister for Health and Social Services, when he announced the circuit breaker, was quoted as saying: "If we do not take this action now we could be facing more stringent restrictions." Well we are facing more stringent restrictions over the Christmas period anyway, is that evidence that the action they took was too little too late?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I do not accept that statement. We always said that we would provide bespoke guidance for Christmas, the reason being that fewer workplaces are open, it is customarily the time of year when people gather together more than they might usually do when social events are planned and therefore there needs to be somewhat of a different regime for Christmas. While it is not going to be the usual sort of Christmas, it will be very quiet - at least I hope it will - the measures will return to what they were pre-Christmas on 5th January. So the reason for the Christmas measures is just the

characteristics of Christmas and us as a population that would change our behaviour over that time. We must try and ensure that behaviour does not lead to an increase in infection.

**1.4.1 Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

If that is the case then, should the Minister not be managing people's expectations better and be more careful over the language he uses? Because the quote was: "If we do not take this action now we could be facing more stringent restrictions" and they took the action and we have got the more stringent restrictions anyway. So either that is evidence that the action they took was inadequate or he is not managing the public's expectations properly by considering his words more carefully. Which is it?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

No, I do not think the Senator has understood my previous comment, that we had always said that we would bring forward a different regime to cover the Christmas period because of the nature of people's behaviour at that time. But my comment made that the Senator has just referred to was for normal times outside of Christmas and it remains the case that if the current measures such as the hospitality lockdown are not effective, and we are yet to see that, then it is possible that harsher measures could unfortunately become necessary, either prior to Christmas or after 5th January. But we are not yet at that point, we have not yet made that assessment, we are waiting to see the effect of the hospitality and other measures announced on 4th December.

**The Bailiff:**

Members are becoming slightly exercised about the order in which they may have their questions called. Just to assist, the way that the questions have been posed on my screen, and I appreciate they may be coming up differently, depending on timing, I suppose, and internet connection on others, is that the next 5 questioners in order will be Deputy Ward, Deputy Gardiner, Deputy Alves and Deputy Morel and then after that Deputies Higgins, Tadier and Perchard and then some others after that. I hope that assists Members.

**1.5 Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier:**

May I ask the Chief Minister, this morning on Radio 4, a member of the S.A.G.E. (Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies) in the U.K. - I apologise, I did not jot down his name - said that infections were rising quickest in the age group of 10 to 18 year-olds. Does the Minister accept this information in this statement?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

Sorry, was the question, does the Minister accept that data?

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

That statement.

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

Well, I do not believe that is backed up by what we are seeing lately and certainly in terms of the data that was shown to States Members last week. The cohort, this is from memory, and I think it was the age bracket that the Deputy is talking about, was showing the lowest levels of infection compared to pretty well every other cohort. That is memory but that is my distinct recollection. All I can say, from recollection and my understanding, is that that is not the issue locally.

**1.5.1 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

What will the Chief Minister say to parents, children and teachers who may have to isolate over the Christmas period because they were contact-traced or became infected in the week coming? What advice would he give to them regards their Christmas celebrations?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I think it is the same advice we give to everybody and if we are going to rehash the arguments that we ran last week about closing schools or not, the very clear advice, and that has been again not just locally but in the U.K. and within Europe, that it is very important to keep schools open because if we do not, firstly, the long-term damage to children was huge and, secondly, the rate of transmission, which is relevant, within the community was higher than what we are seeing in schools. So the advice will remain exactly the same for every other sector, which is if one is unfortunate enough to be tested positive in the next few days, is to continue following the advice and the guidance and to wait to be contacted from the contact-tracing team.

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

I do not think that answered the question but never mind.

**1.6 Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier:**

At the briefing on 12th November, States Members were told that if cases go above 300 by the end of November, beginning of December with no strong signs of flattening, policy options will include: hard, short lockdown prior to Christmas or a longer-term lockdown including Christmas. Why did either of these not happen?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I have to say, I do not recall anybody giving a number. We have been fairly careful around not giving numbers because it always depends, or if a number was given it would have been caveated, on the advice and circumstances of the time. What we have been doing, and certainly since the 12th, is we have put measures in place, including the hospitality lockdown, including the work-from-home advice and including the 2-metres distancing, which are measures that, as I have said, we should hopefully start seeing impact from that around this weekend. It could be just before or just after. It also then means we will evaluate where and what we are seeing in terms of the rate of increase over the next few days.

**1.6.1 Deputy I. Gardiner:**

I would like to refer the Chief Minister to the slides that followed up this presentation. If I will read from the slides, it is above 300 by the end of November and 3,000 isolating with no signs of flattening. So would the Chief Minister please review the slides and come back with the answer why it did not happen?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I am very happy to go back and look at the slides. As I said, what we have been doing is we keep assessing the data on a daily basis. The professionals, including S.T.A.C. (Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell), also obviously assess the data and advise us and, as I have said, the professional advice, including last night, was to hold steady and wait for the measures that we have put in place to take effect. Our expectation is that should be, let us say, just after this weekend and we will continue to monitor it daily.

**1.7 Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier:**

Given the sharp increase in numbers of positive cases and the direct contacts associated with that, I am hearing from numerous members of the public who have had issues getting through to someone on the COVID helpline often waiting 4 hours on the phone and being cut off as well as others, including myself, who are getting alerts on the app and are not being contacted by contact tracing even after 72 hours. What plans, if any, does the Minister have to increase the workforce working on the helpline or extend the hours that the helpline is open for?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**



We acknowledge the challenges that the helpline and the test and trace, the monitoring and enforcement teams have faced because there has undoubtedly been this sharp rise and the challenges that presents. But we have been able to respond to that, and continue to respond to that, by increasing resources and improving the way that the teams work. So the team has increased from 55 full-time employees to 98 full-time employees on 11th December, so Friday, I think, and there remains continued recruitment. There are plans to bring further members of staff in so that numbers will exceed 100.

[10:00]

Then a range of measures have also been implemented to improve responses because, I will take, for one example, the notification of a positive case. That of course can sometimes be a very emotional time for somebody to be informed of that. As an example of changes, that will be carried out in 2 calls. There will be a notification and immediate advice given and a welfare check given. Then another person in the team will make a second call, which will be the longer call, to go through the direct contacts of that recently-identified positive case. The metrics show that the average waiting time for those calling the helpline has been 7 minutes in the last week. Now I have heard, and I do know, that some people have waited much longer than that. With any system that is dealing with thousands of people, there will be inevitably some delays and some errors in the process but we are learning from that. We get emails that point out these delays but we also get emails that speak of how efficient and helpful the teams were. So we are constantly working on it, looking to improve the service that is provided.

#### **1.7.1 Deputy C.S. Alves:**

Will the Minister look at the messaging that appears on the contact-tracing app because fortunately I was able to get through to somebody at contact tracing after I received the alert? I did wait 72 hours because I had been told that by somebody else; however, that was not clear on any of the text messages that I received or any of the information on the app that I should be waiting up to 72 hours to be contacted by contact tracing. So can the Minister look into that, please, and maybe look at changing some of the messaging on the alerts that are appearing on the app?

#### **The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

We will look at that. The intention and what usually happens is that direct contacts are contacted within 24 hours of a positive case being identified, 48 hours maximum is the metric. If communication on the app is 72 hours, we will look at that.

#### **1.8 Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence:**

In the outbreak before the summer, it was assumed that for every case that health authorities knew about there were 10 cases of COVID infection that were unknown. Would the Chief Minister please advise us as to what the ratio is now for known to unknown cases so we can have a clearer idea of how many cases the health authorities believe are in the Island?

#### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

The Deputy has, I think, got it right. So in terms of in the sort of March, April time, yes, the rule of thumb was that for every positive case we were identifying there were 10 out in the community. I believe now it is somewhere between for every positive case there is about 2 or 3 out in the community. By that I mean it goes back to the illustration I was giving to Deputy Pamplin where we have made the disease a lot more visible in Jersey, i.e., that is why our numbers look a lot higher compared to other jurisdictions. If you were to scale them back based on, for example, the hospitalisation rate at the moment, given that we have got 5 cases in the hospital, roughly, that would be equivalent to the U.K. of 100 positive cases per 100,000 whereas we are detecting 700 cases per 100,000. So that does not mean we have got it more, it means because that is backed up by the hospitalisation rates at present, it is indicating how much more or how great a magnifying glass we

have in identifying the extra cases in the community which most other people probably will not be identifying. That means if it is visible, if you can see the enemy, then you can take the measures to try and defeat the enemy and that is what we are doing.

### **1.8.1 Deputy K.F. Morel:**

People are very understandably becoming concerned about the high numbers, the 700-odd figure that we are seeing at the moment, but if we are working on the 2 to 3 times kind of multiplier of the actual number of cases then that brings it somewhere between 1,400 and 2,000, 2,500. Could the Chief Minister explain why this is not being communicated effectively, the total number of assumed cases? Because as I understand it, that is no higher than it was in the earlier part of the pandemic before the summer and may go some way to helping people feel less panicked about the current situation?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

In relation to the communications side, again, there is a further set of communications messaging going out this week, this is on different areas. But what we did do at the beginning of last week, I think it was, is when we did the press conference, which went into a lot of detail around exactly this issue, it was interesting, and I think from memory was watched by about 50,000 people, if one looks on the live-streaming data at various times, that the messages that came back afterwards, certainly that I received and the Minister for Health and Social Services received, were very much of people feeling reassured. What I will agree with the Deputy on, I think that message needs again reinforcing, and again that will be something we will be working on. Equally, as I said, we put that message out certainly on Monday. Dr. Muscat and myself were in the hot seat again trying to put that message out on Friday and we will continue to do so.

### **1.9 Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier:**

Most Islanders believe the Government has lost control of the virus and the guidelines for Christmas, which are more generous than in other parts of the U.K., are likely to cause an even greater spike in the virus after Christmas and swamping the hospital and affecting the emergency services. Now will the Minister tell us what his view is on that statement and also what the current state is for the ambulance service, which is one of our key services we rely on where there is an outbreak and people are isolating? Can he also tell us what is happening in the health service in terms of hospital workers off ill?

### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I think to address the last matter first. The ambulance service is, as I understand it, appropriately resourced, as with any sector across the entire community. I think there have been one or 2 cases but the whole point is there are backup plans there to ensure that the level of service can be maintained. In terms of to address the very early point around do we think we have lost control? No, and the public health advice is very much to hold steady, i.e., that was absolutely reiterated in the meeting that myself and the Minister for Health and Social Services had last night with officials. In terms of the Christmas guidance, obviously the Christmas guidance, we are, as we said, monitoring the position daily. The Christmas guidance does represent a restriction compared to today, it is a clamping down on gatherings compared to the measures that are in place for today. That will come into effect just before Christmas and will carry on until just after new year. Let us be under no illusion, if we felt that further measures would need to be taken, we will take them. At present the advice, as I said, is to hold steady and we need to see where we are, I will say, just after this weekend to see whether the measures that we have put in place are taking effect. Can I say, Sir, and I appreciate your comment about shorter answers, the balance we have to follow all the way through on this is that for every person on the Island who wants to shut us down and lock themselves in their own homes, there is somebody out there who is scared by the impact on their civil liberties and that is the balance we always take on all these issues. It is always based on the medical advice we get and it is

always looking at our understanding of the data that we are getting. Obviously we have vast reams of data that come through that obviously S.T.A.C. and the professionals are looking at on a daily basis.

#### **1.9.1 Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

Can the Minister tell us how many ambulance workers there are, how many of them are off and what the backup is? He also did not answer the question about the number of health personnel in the hospital who are off as well.

#### **Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

Can I come back to the Deputy on that to make sure I give him the accurate data? I do have metrics which I will need just to find on health staff; we get that daily. On ambulance staff, I do not have the information but I will come back to him as soon as I can. I will either do it in response within this question time or I will do it in an email to all States Members as soon as possible.

#### **Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

Could we have the answers to the previous questions I asked in the other session which we have not received back?

#### **1.10 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:**

I know the Minister for Education was not able to take part in the last debate, and I am glad she is feeling somewhat better today. Could I ask her: did she ever support the idea of closing the schools? Did she ever raise that, closing the schools early, and did she raise it with Ministers and either get support or otherwise from them?

#### **Senator T.A. Vallois (The Minister for Education):**

I thank the Deputy for his question. Yes, I have raised many times concerns around particularly operational ability with seeing what might happen, particularly when we were presented with numbers on 12th November, what the strategy in terms of keeping the schools open were. I regularly raised concerns at competent authorities meetings, where I am not a voting member but I am invited to attend, and also at Council of Ministers. I apologise that I was not able to attend last week and the situation that I find myself in with regards to schools is that we are having to work very closely as a department with head teachers in terms of ensuring health and safety in the schools. With regards to the COVID-19 Schools Regulations, I am required to obtain consent from the Minister for Health and Social Services. The S.T.A.C. advice has been clear in terms of the limited effectiveness of curtailing the spread of the virus by closing schools and the increasing evidence of harm by keeping children out of school for longer periods.

#### **1.10.1 Deputy M. Tadier:**

Can I thank the Minister for that answer? She obviously does not need to apologise for having been *malade*, I can still hear she is not well, so I congratulate her for even being here today. The recent figures that I have been given as of yesterday show that the vast majority of those who would have been at school, secondary schools, and also in the alternative curriculum, is that they are absent rather than being present so only a quarter of students in secondary schools are present and similar figures for the alternative curriculum. Does the Minister have a concern that her ministerial colleagues made the wrong decision last week and that teachers, students and parents are being put in an incredibly difficult position this week not knowing which teachers are going to be able to turn up, not knowing whether there is going to be sufficient provision for teaching in this last week and that all this could have been avoided?

#### **The Bailiff:**

This is quite a long supplementary question, Deputy.

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

Sorry, I just finished as you have come in but that is probably the delay.

**Senator T.A. Vallois:**

Despite what myself and my ministerial colleagues believe, we followed the health advice all along, including when we locked down back in March. I recognise of course the schools' average, as of yesterday morning, is that there is 45 per cent present in schools, 55 per cent absent. This is creating a challenge in terms of operational ability. We are doing the best that we can. Our senior advisers are working very closely with the head teachers, especially when cases do arise and ensuring working with contact tracing and the group director of education where regular updates are provided and the specific hygiene requirements and specific requirements around the health guidance are put in place.

[10:15]

**1.11 Deputy J.H. Perchard of St. Saviour:**

The current Christmas guidance allows Islanders to have up to 3 larger gatherings of up to 10 people and an uncapped number of gatherings in groups of 5. While it would be ill-advised, an individual could, under this guidance, meet 27 other people over 3 days under the larger gatherings rule and an unlimited number of people on top of that in groups of 5. Why was this web-like approach taken over a bubble approach which would have seen closed loops of households being able to meet?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

Yes, we did have that argument in the debate and part of the issue is that bubbles only work particularly for family groups. If you have people here who do not have family on Island, it then means you are locking them down into permanent isolation over Christmas to all intents and purposes. So I think the other point was, when we first saw the guidance certainly my view was, and I think it was backed up by Ministers, it was not as simple as could have been the case and that is when in the end, rather than get into definitions of what a household was and all those types of things, is why we set just a number.

**1.11.1 Deputy J.H. Perchard:**

The Government has defined "household" quite clearly in writing as being a group of people who live together and the Minister has just stated that bubbles would only work for family groups. But is it not the case that, given the definition of household, bubbles could have worked for the wider populace given the Government defines a household as being simply people who live together and a bubble has been quite commonly used to mean a group of households?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I will just make the point again, it basically meant that people did not have to choose between ... well, sorry, what we have experienced in, I am going to say, May-time, when the original definitions came through is that in terms of public understanding, although they are defined, there were many questions about how this operated in practice which is, in the end, why we went for a straight number and that is where we have ended up. But what I will say is that there are different approaches; this is the approach we have taken, some people can go for numbers and some people can go for bubbles in terms of jurisdictions. One has got to make a decision, that is the decision we have taken; we thought it was the simplest one. It is certainly not going to please everyone, I know that, and, equally, there are already people who think it is too restrictive, which goes back to that point about balance. What I will say, we must recognise this is a restriction relative to the gatherings numbers that are presently in place. So, it is a restriction relative to what one can do now and that is specifically for defining because it is Christmas, but it does equally achieve a balance between allowing people to have some sort of Christmas. We do keep this under review every day and obviously if that was to change, then

we would need to take further steps but that is the present position and it is a restriction relative to what we presently enjoy.

**1.12 Deputy T. Pointon of St. John:**

The Minister for Education has already told us that there are only 45 per cent of students currently attending schools, how many of their teachers are currently unable to go into their place of work because of COVID at this time?

**Senator T.A. Vallois:**

The latest information I have, and it is probably not going to specifically answer the Deputy's question, but I will make sure those specific numbers are provided to him and up to date, but between 1st December and 14th December I believe there were 6 staff directly affected in terms of the COVID. In terms of the actual numbers of teachers not in, I do not have that in front of me right now. So if the Deputy of St. John would be able to accept that, I can send that to him and fellow States Members when I receive that from officers.

**1.12.1 The Deputy of St. John:**

In addition to that, we have not heard anything about primary schools. What are the numbers of pupils who are having to isolate in the primary schools at this time?

**Senator T.A. Vallois:**

In terms of the actual isolation number, I do not have that, but in terms of the attendance rate, primary schools, as of yesterday morning, there were 60 per cent present and 40 per cent absent.

**1.13 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour:**

If it is deemed medically necessary to move to further restrictions, what would the next steps be, please?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I fear that it would look more like a complete societal lockdown. Shops, non-essential shops, could be shut, schools could be shut, much against our better judgment because we believe education is important, but if it was ever necessary those sort of measures could be taken.

**1.13.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

The Minister mentioned in this order that lockdown might occur and then he mentioned schools would be shut. Can he confirm that if there was a lockdown at community level in January, say, that the schools would still remain open or would the schools also be closed at that time?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

Well that is a hypothetical question. It is our policy to keep the schools open as far as it is possible because obviously we all believe in the value of education, we believe that children's education was affected last spring, and we want to not impose that harm on them, so as much as possible will be done to keep the schools open.

**1.14 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

With regard to delivery of the vaccine, why are people proposing to use the Fort? If you need a space as big as the Fort, presumably you expect a lot of people at any given time, so how is it proposed to get them safely up lots of flights of stairs, when heavy breathing is a known risk, up lifts, when that is a definite risk, and then up an enclosed tube with a moving ... somebody else has put their thing on, their Microsoft, it is echoing all over the place.

**The Bailiff:**

Well, have you finished your question ...

**Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

No, I have not. Sorry about this.

**The Bailiff:**

Please ask your question then.

**Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Then the capacity of the roof car park will not be sufficient to deal with the throughput they must be anticipating. Why do they not at least have the option of a drive-through somewhere like the testing centre at *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)*, that was described as drive-through tests, or Albert Bartlett who make the facility available to the community off season. Excellent roads, vast roof spaces where ...

**The Bailiff:**

Senator, Standing Orders require that the question is succinct and, although you were interrupted, that is quite a lengthy question. Could you bring it to a close, please, so the Minister can ...

**Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

You could get your staff rugged up with infrared patio heaters and they could swipe, jab and plaster with great efficiency up at Albert Bartlett. How on earth are they going to do it up at the Fort, would the Minister like to tell us how?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I thank the Senator for her question but would like to assure her that the space at the Fort has been fully assessed and all infection-control measures have been implemented, they have been carefully thought through, they have received the approval of Dr. Muscat, there has been a full risk assessment and all the measures required by that risk assessment have been met. Everything appropriate is in place, including parking arrangements and arrangements for people with vulnerabilities to be kept safe. This is a large space that will allow for distancing and appropriate safety measures, so I am entirely confident that this has been well provided and will serve the Island well.

**1.14.1 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Has the Minister walked through the process up at the Fort? Do you really want to get on a bus in St. John and sit with a whole lot of other people with masks, breathing, not entirely safely, altogether, and then you get up to the Fort, how do you get up there? You are a bit old, you are a bit fragile and you cannot walk very fast. I am sorry, the whole thing is ridiculous. Would the Minister tell me that he has walked through the process, say, by bus from St. Ouen to see what it is like? Even the Governor goes through ...

**The Bailiff:**

Senator, this really does have to be a clear question, it cannot be a speech. I am afraid I am going to stop you there and ask the Minister to ask whether he has had personal experience of walking through, how it would work.

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

Were I to travel from St. Ouen to any vaccination centre, I would need to travel, whether it is at Fort Regent or Albert Bartlett or any other venue. The important thing, because I have not yet visited, though that is planned, is that Dr. Muscat has walked through the procedures, all those involved in our infection control team have walked through the procedures, physically walked through everything that will happen up at the Fort, that there is provision for all needs, including those with

disabilities and vulnerabilities. This is the best option for the Island and our team have made it work and they will be efficient, and I hope all Islanders will take up the option of the vaccine.

**1.15 Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier:**

Does the Chief Minister accept that the situation has changed so markedly that he needs, as a matter of urgency, to call an emergency meeting of Ministers in order to examine and thoroughly analyse the plans they have for the next 3 weeks?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

As ever, the competent authorities rely on the advice of the medical professionals. As I have said, the Minister for Health and Social Services and myself had a meeting last night with officials and the public advice to date is to hold steady. So the short answer, if I was to accept what the Deputy has just stated, I would therefore be ignoring the medical advice that has guided us so well. I do reiterate the point, and I think Deputy Morel has properly understood it, is that we are making the disease a lot more visible here by orders of magnitude bigger than any other jurisdiction and that is what is influencing the figures. Therefore, on the basis of the advice that we have had, and the detailed analysis, we do not need at this stage to move away from what the medical advice is. I will also just take the opportunity, because it is relevant, Deputy Gardiner asked about certain measures at certain trigger points. The point is, on the slides that she has suggested, there were options identified and one of those options was a circuit breaker.

[10:30]

The circuit breaker is what we have put in place for hospitality and we will not see the impact of that until just after this weekend and that is including the work-from-home advice and the 2-metre distancing. But I really emphasise the point and I will arrange, which we ordinarily would have done, without having the hour of questions today, a full briefing for Members which will give a proper update of the contact tracing, I think that is useful, and also yet again the context of what we are operating in terms of the volume of testing we are doing, which makes the disease more visible. It is exactly the same as Members were updated on last week and as we updated the public and, as I said, the public advice to date is to hold steady.

**1.15.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

I believe the Minister, and necessarily his advisers, are misunderstanding the figures. An infection rate of 10 per cent is 10 per cent whether you do one test or 3,000 if that is what you end up with. The bare numbers reflect a percentage of the worsening of the infections in this Island. When will he move?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

Where we have got to be very careful is when we start producing percentages without understanding the context, so I do not recognise that 10 per cent. Our positivity rate is around 3 per cent, or just under 3 per cent, and that is really, really important to understand because otherwise that is the type of mixed messaging that does cause concern within the public.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Is it a call for action?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

That number I do not think is correct. Our positivity rate is just around or just under 3 per cent. We do not have a 10 per cent infection rate, because that would mean something like 11,000 people would be showing as having the virus at any one time. We are nowhere near those figures.

**The Bailiff:**

The Deputy of St. Martin, you have indicated a desire to extend this period. I am afraid I cannot allow a proposition to be put in those terms because the meeting request specified one hour of questions. That is the basis on which the entire exercise has been permitted and it cannot be extended, I am afraid.

**1.16 Deputy G.J. Truscott of St. Brelade:**

A new variant of the COVID-19 virus has been identified in the U.K., which is attributed to increased numbers of COVID cases. Could the Minister confirm if this variant has been identified locally?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

I am not aware that it has been identified locally. I have received some information from Dr. Muscat this morning, who advises me that viruses are known to mutate very regularly and the vast majority of mutations are of no clinical relevance. Countries around the world are looking at the present mutation to see if there is any significant variation. This has occurred primarily in the south-east of England. At the same time there is increasing spread in the south-east of England. It is unclear if this new mutant can spread more easily or not. At present there is no evidence of the mutation causing more severe disease and the changes are such that it is very likely to continue to be covered by the current vaccine. I hope that puts the matter in context, but clearly there is research going on as we speak to investigate this question.

**1.16.1 Deputy G.J. Truscott:**

Could the Minister indicate if tests will be carried out on-Island to establish the presence of the variant and if not why not?

**The Deputy of St. Ouen:**

Yes, all tests I expect would show up in the same way it has shown up in the south of England. Exactly what medical information is derived from a test would perhaps be best answered by Dr. Muscat. The Chief Minister has alluded to a briefing that we are to hold for States Members later this week. I will ask him to be ready to answer that question. It is clearly showing up in tests in the south-east and would show up here.

**1.17 Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier:**

What are the benefits weighted or balanced against the risks to families and others mixing households at Christmas?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I am not too sure I fully understand this question. If the question is the benefits of allowing any form of mixing versus a lockdown, then it is very clear that any lockdown has huge issues around mental health, around economic activity, which ultimately then does lead to health issues. If it was not restricted to a holiday period potentially there are educational outcomes as well, and there are already references to the damage that this is doing to the education of young people. I think that is, in the round, exactly what Dr. Muscat has said on a number of occasions, as has Mr. Armstrong around the damage that we are seeing, which ultimately then is around the educational side, which then has an impact on effectively economic activity later, which then unfortunately does also have an impact on health. It is a balance. I am happy to discuss that in more detail. I am acutely aware of time and trying to keep the answer short.

**1.17.1 Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:**

That was not quite the answer I was looking for, however I will follow with a supplementary. How will he address the impact that will clearly follow allowing households to mix over Christmas?

**Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**



Again to reiterate the point, in terms of now, i.e., today, versus the Christmas period. In the Christmas period there is less mixing permitted than is presently the case. There will be a restriction. If the Deputy is also referring to what may happen or if there are any concerns about what might happen in January, again that is something we continue to monitor and will address. Again, that is one of the reasons we are putting the guidance in place, to get into people's minds that there are restrictions over Christmas. To be really clear, those restrictions are backed up by law. They are not just guidance; they are enforceable law.

### **1.18 Senator S.W. Pallett**

Will the Minister outline what further support he is considering for the hospitality sector, especially bars, restaurants and cafés, who have to endure a large drop in takings during what is normally a golden month for income for their businesses?

#### **Senator L.J. Farnham (The Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture):**

Yes, lockdown for the hospitality sector has been particularly hard hit, and of course for the gyms and health sector as well, who have also been probably worst impacted throughout the length of the pandemic, despite a short respite in the summer months. There are I think decisions to be made this week as to whether the hospitality sector might be allowed to open in some format, but I think, given the current state of play, that is highly unlikely and that the continued circuit breaker will continue until after Christmas. However, I would reiterate that those decisions are still to be made. Officers have been asked to put together a scheme for some additional help for the sector and they are working on that now, but of course that scheme will be dependent on decisions made this week about how long the circuit breaker will be extended for. I want to reassure the Senator and Members that officers are working on it. Of course this will have to be approved by all Ministers but I have stressed the urgency to officers because it is important we try to provide some assistance and certainty to the sector as soon as possible.

#### **1.18.1 Senator S.W. Pallett:**

I am pleased that the Minister is looking at further support. Having spoken to some businesses they are clearly in a desperate situation and some of them may not survive this festive period and into next year. Has the Minister considered asking the licensing bench to suspend alcohol licences across the board apart from off-licences? One of the issues is around alcohol and concerns that alcohol promotes poor behaviour from those that are in restaurants and bars. Has he considered removing the aspect of alcohol and allowing some small cafés, for example, to open that have liquor licences?

#### **Senator L.J. Farnham:**

The short answer to that is no. I have spoken to a number of outlets who have asked whether they should consider suspending their licences, but of course it will not alleviate the problem. The objective of the hospitality circuit breaker is to reduce the opportunity for people to mix and socialise and reduce the spread of COVID-19. It matters not in my opinion whether during the day alcohol is served. COVID does not distinguish between whether you are having a glass of wine with lunch or a cup of coffee or a bacon roll in the morning. Suspending licences would have the opposite effect of what we are trying to achieve, which is to curtail the spread of COVID-19. We have allowed establishments with places of refreshment licences to remain open. Although that is not really consistent it still provides a much-reduced opportunity for Islanders to get a cup of coffee or a sandwich as part of their daily routine. By suspending licences we would just open up the problem again, so I regret to say I do not think that is the solution and I very much hope we can continue to allow the places of refreshment to stay open on a limited basis throughout the Christmas period, to provide that essential service.

### **PUBLIC BUSINESS – resumption**

## **2. Government Plan 2021–2024 (P.130/2020): twentieth amendment (P.130/2020 Amd.(20))**

## **The Bailiff:**

Thank you very much, Senator. Even allowing for the additional 5 minutes that I have allowed by way of injury time that brings the question period to an end and accordingly we now move on with Public Business. Members will recall we will operate under the usual time-limited speeches and a bell will be rung when a Member's speaking time has expired. We will resume consideration of the Government Plan, P.130, and the next amendment in the running order is the 20th amendment lodged by Deputy Higgins and I ask the Greffier to read that amendment.

## **The Deputy Greffier of the States:**

Page 2, paragraph (f) – After the words “Appendix 2 – Summary Tables 5(i) and (ii) of the Report” insert the words – “, except that in Summary Table 5(ii) the overall head of expenditure shall be reduced by £1,000,000 through the removal of funding allocated to States of Jersey Police Firearms Range, and that the overall head of expenditure in Summary Table 5(i) shall be increased by £1,000,000 to allow for a grant to be given to the Sea Cadets Jersey to fund, either completely or substantially, the acquisition of new headquarters”.

### **2.1 Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

After yesterday's debate and defeat regarding the funding of a *pro bono* legal aid facility at the Institute of Law at the University College at Highlands I considered withdrawing this amendment to the Government Plan because I was proposing the same funding stream, but decided against doing so because the whole question of a new headquarters for the Jersey Sea Cadets demands a debate. To my mind the saga of finding a new home for the sea cadets has been one of Jersey's longest-running scandals, which encompasses indecision, financial waste, incompetence and broken promises to our children and youth. This morning I was listening to BBC Radio Jersey and heard their reports on broken promises that had been made to the care leavers and the promise of a skateboard park for skateboarders at Les Quennevais, and thinking about how Members of the States cannot understand the low esteem that Islanders have in Government, this Government and its predecessors, and politicians in general.

[10:45]

We have absolutely no credibility in the public's eye because we repeatedly make and then repeatedly break promises and we wonder why the public have no confidence in us. Politicians are seen as self-serving and dealing and have the memory of pigeons and never follow through. The broken promises do not get much worse than those given to the sea cadets, which have lasted for almost 4 decades, from 1982 to the present time. Let me start by reminding Members who the sea cadets are before outlining our repeated failures. The Jersey Sea Cadets, known as Training Ship Undaunted, is a uniformed charitable youth organisation dedicated to the development of young people aged between 10 and 18 years of age. Although it is not controlled by the Royal Navy it operates in partnership with them under a memorandum of understanding that gives the cadets access to a unique range of activities and facilities not available to non-uniformed organisations. The aim of the sea cadets is to give young people an experience that will help them grow into the people that they want to be in a safe and friendly environment. The sea cadets engage in a range of activities: sailing, windsurfing, power boating, rock climbing, music and camping in the Island and a range of activities in the U.K. such as attending camps or visiting Royal Navy establishments and warships and crewing the ROYALIST sail training ship. Through these activities the cadets learn teamwork, respect, loyalty, self-confidence, commitment, self-discipline and honesty, which make them not only good citizens but also very employable workers. Many of these cadets have joined the Armed Forces, the Jersey police, fire, customs and ambulance services. TS Jersey was formed in 1949 and was based at Fort Regent in different accommodation until the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1969 the Royal Marine Cadet Unit was also formed for 13 to 18 year-olds. In 1970 a new headquarters, owned by the States, was built on the Fort Regent site and the unit moved in, in 1971, and was given a promise that they

would always have a home. In 1992 as the site at Fort Regent was wanted by the States for other purposes the unit was given notice to quit and since then they have considered themselves in temporary accommodation while the States looked to relocate them. Maintenance on their headquarters was almost non-existent, as no one wanted to invest in premises that were likely to be demolished. In December 1994 the States allocated £600,000 within the capital programme for 1995 to secure a new home for them, even though doubts were expressed as to whether the then Sport, Leisure and Recreation Committee, which would receive the capital programme monies, had a viable and firmly-costed rehoming scheme in place. This was followed by several years of difficulties in securing inter-committee co-operation and 32 per cent of the budget was spent over the years on fees for plans and drawings for various locations and also advice on contamination on one of the sites. In December 2005 with the introduction of ministerial government the balance of the original £600,000 capital allocation, amounting to £407,000, became the responsibility of the Education, Sport and Culture Department before being transferred to Jersey Property Holdings in 2006. Several sites have been considered over the years including the old lifeboat station, the Territorial Army unit at Mount Bingham and the Albert Pier. The reasons for not progressing with these sites have been varied. They include cost and suitability and other needs and priorities for the sites. The money remained dormant in the budget until 2011 when the then draft 2011 Island Plan was successfully amended so that it contained a specific provision to provide a building suitable to accommodate the headquarters facility of the Jersey Sea Cadets at a site known as Les Galots on the old South Pier in St. Helier. This site was to be part of a marine complex and some £300,000 of the money allocated to the sea cadets was spent on the project before it was abandoned, much of it spent trying to meet the requirements of the other bodies that were going to share the premises with them. It is my understanding that just over £100,000 of the original budget remained and that this has now been transferred to central funds. The States failure to maintain the external fabric of the Fort Regent building, spending only £13,000 between 1982 and 2019, meant that it was deemed unsafe in 2019 after water ingress through the roof mixed with electrical equipment, and asbestos was found in the building. In November 2020 it was announced by the Minister for Home Affairs that the unit would be housed temporarily in the old Rouge Bouillon Police Station, and that a search for a new headquarters would again be started. Although the unit is grateful for the support that they have received from the Minister for Home Affairs they fear, as do their supporters, that the Rouge Bouillon site will become an extended temporary accommodation until such time as the States decide they want to develop the site for housing, or as an extension to Rouge Bouillon School, or for some other purpose. This fear is based on the fact that no funds have been allocated in the Home Affairs budget in the Government Plan for the new headquarters. The purpose of this amendment is to ask the Government to honour its commitment to put children first and its previous promises to the unit, and to give the unit £1 million to enable a search for the new site to commence immediately and for architectural drawings to be drafted and to commence the construction of a dedicated sea cadet unit without delay. It is time for the Government to stop talking and start delivering. In the proposition I identified a source of finance in the Home Affairs budget and it is my contention that instead of buying a gold-plated firing range for the States of Jersey Police that the money could be better used for the sea cadet unit. I believe that the money allocated for the firing range could be transferred to the sea cadet unit, which is also administered by the Home Affairs Department, in accordance with the advice given by the former Solicitor General, Howard Sharp, in relation to how the funds from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund were given to the States of Jersey Police for a fully-funded police headquarters. In other words, the police already have the money, Home Affairs have the money, they were given additional money and that additional money, £3.5 million, was then transferred to the Chief Minister's office and then in the form of a grant to the National Trust. I know the current Solicitor General disagrees with his predecessor's advice, but I believe a precedent has been made and should be followed until such time as the loophole for transferring these funds is closed by legislation. If not, I call on the Government to fund the headquarters without delay and ensure that the money is not squandered, as it has been in the past.

## **The Bailiff:**

Is the amendment seconded? **[Seconded]** Then I open the debate.

### **2.1.1 Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement:**

I have to say the Deputy and I really are at one on this, and I have made a pledge to the sea cadets' committee and during the debate in the States recently that the longstanding saga of a permanent headquarters for the sea cadets will be resolved and resolved quickly but this, I am afraid, is not the way. Once again the Deputy wants to take the money, which has already been allocated for the police firearms range, to provide a grant to the sea cadets. This money of course, as we discussed yesterday, comes from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund. That fund simply cannot be used, as the Solicitor General told us yesterday, as one wishes. It is not a self-service buffet. The Proceeds of Crime (Jersey) Law, as the Solicitor General reminded us yesterday, dictates that money from the fund can only be used for preventing, suppressing or other work dealing with criminal conduct, dealing with the consequences of criminal conduct or facilitating the enforcement of any enactment dealing with criminal conduct, and discharging Jersey's obligations under asset sharing agreements. The Deputy did mention again this morning about an incident that happened in 2011 when perhaps things were not done properly, but if there were questionable decisions in the past that does not mean that we should make questionable decisions now. Also, before monies can be allocated from the fund, the Attorney General has to sign off the business case and the funds and of course it is a matter for the Attorney General but I note he was not consulted about this amendment. I cannot see that funding for the sea cadets would meet the criteria that the Solicitor General mentioned yesterday and I have repeated now. In fact, the Attorney General has indicated to me that it could not be used for that purpose. In response to yesterday's debate, I also discussed the need for a new firearms range for the police, and I will not go over that again in great detail. I would remind Members that not only does a local accredited range offer the potential to realise some significant savings, as I mentioned it costs us upwards of £150,000 a year to send the police officers for training in the United Kingdom, it also enables the police to undertake very necessary training without the operational difficulties presented by off-Island training, which can lead to shortages of staff. I absolutely recognise, and I have said it to the committee and to the States, that the sea cadets have not been well treated historically by the States. In fact, that is an understatement. They have been very badly treated by the States over decades and they have faced significant uncertainty over the years as to the future base of their operations. As the Deputy said, this year we decided to move them on a temporary basis to the old police headquarters site. We expect them to be able to begin occupying that building in January once the work is complete to bring it up to standard. Simultaneously officers from Home Affairs and Property Holdings are working to identify a long-term future home for the sea cadets that will meet their needs and provide them much needed certainty. Once identified a bid for funding will be included in the 2022 Government Plan. The Deputy is quite understandably worried that this temporary location will become permanent. I can sympathise with that concern and I understand that sea cadet leaders feel like we have been here before. I do have a very vested interest in ensuring that this is only a temporary arrangement because it is one of the most likely sites for the new combined fire service and ambulance headquarters, and therefore I do not want to see anybody occupying that building for any longer than is absolutely necessary. I can assure the States that I have been very clear with officers about my intentions to provide the sea cadets with a solution and I have given this Assembly in debates in recent months very clear commitments on this matter as well. We need to find an answer for the sea cadets but this is not it. I have said and what I intend to do is talk to the officers from Property Holdings and Home Affairs that if a new site is not identified by the end of this year I promise to bring a proposition to the States very early in the new year to ensure that funds are inscribed in the 2022 Government Plan and a States decision is made to refurbish and rebuild their site at Fort Regent, which I know some people do not want but I suspect we are going to have to do that, because it is probably the most appropriate site. The interests of the sea cadets are very much in my heart. I intend to find the solution. This is not the solution, to take money from the

States of Jersey Police for the purpose. We could find the money through the Government Plan and I ask Members to reject the amendment.

### **2.1.2 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

This is perhaps one of the values of the long-term senatorial ranks, as this usually comprises the corporate memory of the States.

[11:00]

Over the years the civil service has managed to forget the various decisions made by the States. Some of us have remembered this and I think this is why this proposition has arisen. Plans have been drawn up for updating the current site at pretty well cost price. This is all well-advanced, for instance I asked for the support of the previous Minister for Children and Housing but he did not seem to be interested in it, although it is something for children. It really is quite disgraceful that it has taken since the year dot for this to be brought back. Everybody said: "Oh, yes, we are all very interested" and then somehow it gets forgotten again. It is a good site for the kids. It has got reasonable access to the harbour and it can be done up properly. I know one of the previous directors of Property Holdings, David Flowers, was very interested in getting it going again. He was very community-minded and we have brought it back to the current deputy or the acting director and we do not seem to have got anywhere with that. As one of the previous speakers has said, I think it was Deputy Higgins, every time it comes up everybody says: "Oh, well, yes, but we need that site for something else." It really is absolutely disgraceful. It is doing a fabulous job with the kids. Those that stay on in the forces, Marines or the Navy, are progressing very well and they get significant rewards and they are just being kicked into touch; it is quite wrong. As far as I am concerned, we should somehow be providing them with the money. The Education Department have been the ones spending the money. The cadet force has not had a finger in, to get their finger in the pie, to say what should happen to the progression of redoing the headquarters. It has all been under the auspices of the Education Department who, over the years, not currently but over the past few years have just frittered it away. I feel very strongly that we should be honouring a debt, a promise, and I would like to hear somebody say that they will make sure there are some funds to let them get on with the redevelopment of Fort Regent. It does not fit well. They say: "Oh, we want it to be part of this housing estate" or: "We want it to be part of this, that or the other." It is very good at what it is doing and it has a very thriving community, in fact all our military groups are very good, and they should be supported. I would support this but if you cannot provide the money then I would like some security that the money will be made available for this very well worthwhile organisation.

### **2.1.3 Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:**

I did not speak yesterday but intended to speak today. I am quite saddened and disappointed that we would consider removing funds from a critical area of our business. When we talk about a firearms' facility, which the States of Jersey Police already have, let us be quite clear, and I am unaware how many individuals within the States Assembly would have visited the current site. Over the last 30-odd years I have only been there on a couple of occasions myself. Can I paint a picture? It is not a proper building, as I would describe it. In fact, from memory, it is either a shed or a concrete bunker of some description and an outside facility, unless they have modernised it in recent years, which I am totally unaware of but I think not. It is not a modern training facility that we would expect to have for any of our emergency or essential services. The money is critical for that facility to be improved and I think it is well overdue. Of course we will remember the length of time it took us to find a location for the new police station, but a number of other things I am sure are in the same position. In order to be able to train and ensure our standards are up to the national standards we need to make sure that all police officers that have any specialist skills, but particularly those of firearms, which as anyone will appreciate are imperative to be up to speed and perfect, so when you look at a firearms officer what you have is somebody that has to train a number of allocated days per

year in order to reclassify annually. For each firearm they use they will have to do additional days because across the board they will train for every single weapon that they carry. Their training to me is imperative. We need to make sure that we keep the money in that budget for that purpose and to make sure that they are able to do their jobs effectively to keep us all safe and secure at night. However, I also see what Deputy Higgins has brought forward because I, for one, over the last 5 or 6 years have seen what has happened in relation to the sea cadets and it is not a good picture for Jersey, who puts forward that we look after children, yet we cannot even organise ourselves sufficiently to find permanent premises or to update a premise where they already are. I cannot support this today but rest assured when this proposition or somebody brings this back to the Assembly with a funding budget for the sea cadets I will be 110 per cent supporting it. It is time that we got ourselves together and kept our promises, as Senator Ferguson said. I am sorry to Deputy Higgins today because I cannot support this, because I cannot support taking money from the States of Jersey Police in order that they can have a facility that is 21st century, not the 19th century. Apologies to Deputy Higgins but I will support whatever comes next in relation to a new facility for the sea cadets.

#### **2.1.4 Connétable C.H. Taylor of St. John:**

First, I need to declare an interest because I am a member of the sea cadets management committee and my 2 youngest children both attended the sea cadets, although that was some 5 years ago now. I became involved with the sea cadets in 2011, when my children first joined and I was appalled at the state of the unit up at Fort Regent. In 2011 I was delighted that Senator Gorst brought an amendment to the Island Plan to outline Les Galots as the site for the new cadet unit. There was the debacle over a substantial building far too big for the site that was proposed by the then Minister for Infrastructure and that was resoundingly defeated and it did not progress. I then took up the cudgels myself and got a building firm that I am acquainted with to come forward with a quote and in the second Medium Term Financial Plan £1.2 million was earmarked for the building of a new sea cadet unit. The site was therefore approved in the Island Plan, I had got a design, the budget was made up in the Medium Term Financial Plan and we were all ready to go. The cost of the new sea cadet unit on that site was £900,000 plus the necessary ground works that would be needed, because that is an old oil storage site. Funds were there, the site was there, everything was there, but unfortunately Ports of Jersey were not strong enough to agree that the site be progressed and there was friction and confrontation, even, from the Jersey Rowing Club. After 3 years of debate finally in 2018 it was shelved. I was very disappointed. That is an ideal site; it was in the Island Plan; everything could have gone ahead, but I am afraid unfortunately it did not. We are now at a stage where something is more than urgent, it is over-urgent, because we have had to move out of the premises the sea cadets had and into temporary accommodation. I was pleased to hear the promises made by the Constable of St. Clement as Minister for Home Affairs, and I shall take great care to hold him to those and look forward to getting a new sea cadet unit either somewhere on the harbour front or as a last resort refurbish the existing unit. Unfortunately I see a difficulty in supporting this proposition, but I hope that I may be able to work with the Constable of St. Clement and bring to fruition a site that we can be proud of, a site that can equally match the quality of the cadets that we have in our Sea Cadets. To outline the quality of those Sea Cadets, twice in the last 10 years the Marine detachment has won the Gibraltar Cup, which is for the best Marine detachment, British Isles. That is a substantial achievement and I believe also, if my memory is correct, within the last 12 to 15 years the sea cadet unit itself has won the best cadet unit British Isles. I expect the building to match the quality of our cadets.

#### **2.1.5 Deputy M. Tadier:**

I want to take a step back from what we are talking about, but still keep it relevant, and look at why we find ourselves in this situation. What Deputy Higgins has been describing, what the Constable of St. Clement has been describing, is a symptom of a wider problem when it comes to the sea cadets' home for the future. It is interesting because he was once Senator Norman, of course, and he was

also a Deputy for St. Clement and I think he is one of our longest-serving Members, so I think he has probably got the longest memory. I think he might be the longest-serving Member. He has seen things come and go and he must be as frustrated as anyone when he sees projects not being delivered. Off the top of my head in just the last minute or 2 I have been thinking of a few things, and let us see if we can find what is in common with them. So you have got the Steam Clock, you have got La Folie Inn and you have got Fort Regent, you have got the old swimming pool building at Fort Regent. Only yesterday we were talking about parts of Elizabeth Castle that needed to be refurbished.

[11:15]

This morning on the radio we have heard about the skate park now not being delivered apparently at Les Quennevais, despite that being a cornerstone pledge for many in the last election, and indeed something the Council of Ministers have committed to delivering out at Les Quennevais. I think the list can go on. They are all things that are relatively straightforward, you would have thought, which have often in some cases anyway been committed to for decades. Yesterday we heard about the Elizabeth Castle project decided 40 years ago and absolutely no action being taken on it. I was prompted to make these points when I heard Senator Ferguson say that she puts this constant malaise that comes back to the States of not getting certain key projects done down to the fact that maybe we do not have Senators, or one of the benefits of having Senators is that you can remember back to what has not been done. I think that is first of all flawed and a *non sequitur*, because I do not think it is anything to do with the Senatorial position. I think I know what she means; she means that in the past there has always been some continuity in the States. I think fundamentally the problem is that we do not have Governments that we can hold to account for not delivering things like the Port Galots development, even when it seems to be universally supported. Ultimately it comes back to the point that we do not have party politics in Jersey. If we had a Government that was led by a minority or a majority parliamentary party and they said: "We are going to do this" and they either failed to deliver it or did do it, they would either succeed or they would have to deal with any potential failure on that policy and explain it to the public. What happens under our current system is that even longstanding Members can come back and say: "Oh, well, you know I tried. It was the fault of Ports of Jersey this time." That leads me on to the next point. Why do we find it strange when we abdicate our responsibility as a Government and as an Assembly and say: "Okay, we are going to give all these assets to a quango like Ports of Jersey or another quango like States of Jersey Development Company" and when things get done because they say: "We are not interested in developing this project for you because we are arm's-length and have not got the money" why do we find it strange and complain when they do not deliver things, especially when certain politicians and the majority of politicians have set up that very apparatus, which then fails to deliver? It does not make any sense. It must be a source of acute embarrassment for the "majoritarian" right-leaning Members of the Assembly historically and present for whom something like supporting the sea cadets should come very naturally. Yet they cannot do it because their Government apparatus is so faulty that they cannot deliver those basic pledges and promises that they have set out to do. It is a good thing to do; it is not exclusively of course something for the right, that we cannot even find a home for our sea cadets. Let us learn a lesson here. Whatever happens today, whether this is delivered by Deputy Higgins' mechanism or by another funding stream that the Minister has committed to, that is great, but let us please not find ourselves in these situations time and time again, and let us learn from it so we do not have to take up more time from what should be the bread and butter of Government.

### **2.1.6 Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary:**

I begin by very much identifying myself with the comments made by Deputy Le Hegarat, certainly the States of Jersey Police do require that range and they do therefore need the funds for that. I also very much support her comments in relation to the provision of facilities for the sea cadets, as to which many Members have spoken. Again I am at one with her, but not from this source. However, the main reason I wish to speak was because of the contribution made by the Constable of St. John,

particularly in relation to the Les Galots site and the involvement of the Jersey Rowing Club. My own recollection, and I was a member of the rowing club at the time, was that a subcommittee was set up that involved representatives of the sea cadets and the rowing club and indeed myself and, as I recall, Senator Pallett to consider the plans that the Constable referred to for creating a marine centre, not only for the use of the cadets but the rowing club and other sports organisations as well. The last meeting I attended was very much a co-operative one. We were all pulling in the same direction, saw the advantages of that and I think in fairness to the Ports of Jersey C.E.O. (chief executive officer) at the time he was very much in favour of it, as indeed was the rowing club. I am unsure as to why that particular plan was shelved. I suspect the demands of the various organisations required greater funds than were available but certainly matters were proceeding on the basis that any development at Les Galots was to be for all sorts of activities and not simply just the Sea Cadets and not simply the rowing club. I would like to place on record that I do not think any problem was caused by the rowing club who, as I recall, were very much co-operative in what was intended and perhaps will be so again in the future. From what I hear, that particular plan has now been shelved and therefore I wish further funds to be provided for the sea cadets at some future time, but not from this particular source.

### **2.1.7 Deputy K.C. Lewis of St. Saviour:**

Very briefly, when I became Minister for Infrastructure in 2018 at that time the Department for Property Holdings was also part of my remit. I have in fact visited the cadet centre at Fort Regent and it was truly in an appalling condition; truly appalling. Apart from water ingress coming from several areas it would be too expensive to repair. The only possible alternative would be to demolish and rebuild. Water ingress everywhere, dampness everywhere, the water coming in near the mains electricity was completely unacceptable especially with young people around, windows wired shut in case they fell out. The only thing we could do is to take the cadets out and find them an alternative base. The only place remotely suitable we found was the old police station in Rouge Bouillon, so obviously we approached the Minister for Home Affairs who oversees sea cadets and we agreed that it should go there. My head of Property Holdings and my Assistant Minister, the Deputy of Trinity, oversaw all the negotiations with the sea cadets. They will be there for the foreseeable future and I am very keen to find them suitable premises, if not build them suitable premises, in the not too distant future. I fully agree with the reprovisioning for the sea cadets but I am also not unfamiliar with the shooting range up at Crabbé and the police certainly do need their own range and training facilities, which I fully support. I certainly do not support taking the money from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund. That would be a step too far.

### **2.1.8 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Here we are once again at the end of the year, just pre-Christmas, and it is business as usual, a firm commitment from the Constable of St. Clement to have something on the plan by 2022, but nothing this year, 2021. That is supported, a promise of support, from Senator Ferguson, and that is excellent. So that is one firm commitment, one promise of support. Then the Constable of St. John expresses a hope that he will have something before him in the coming year. The Constable of St. Mary expresses a wish that this should happen and he would support it. Then the Minister for Infrastructure or the Minister for Doing Nothing, as I labelled him yesterday, is very keen to have some facility in the not too distant future. Effectively, nothing will happen and there are, as I remind Members, a million slips between cup and lip. Anything could happen in the next year, as they used to say on that rescue programme, and there are any number - a million - ways in which this could be blocked and stopped from happening. There are other priorities. We could see some shroud waving as we go through the year if things get worse than they are now, and indeed with Brexit looming ...

### **The Bailiff:**

Sorry, Deputy, you have gone silent.



**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Somebody shut me up. Who is shutting me up?

**The Bailiff:**

Well, I assure you it did not happen at this end.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

When did I go silent, Sir? Which bit of my rant?

**The Bailiff:**

I cannot immediately recall, but you have only been quiet for the last 15 seconds or so.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Okay, right. Thank you, Sir. In that case I will sum up I think and if people hear it in duplicate then so be it. The Minister for Infrastructure, the Minister for Doing Nothing, as I labelled him last week is keen that something will happen, somebody will do something in the not too distant future. Once again here we are in a position where we are debating something we could enact now, yet we will not see it. We have got hopes, we have got wishes, we have got commitments, we have got promises, we have got nothing.

**2.1.9 Senator S.W. Pallett:**

I am only going to speak very briefly. I want to reflect on some of the comments that the Deputy of St. Mary has made, because my recollection is very much the same as his in terms of some of the options that were available previously. A comment that the Constable of St. John made around the rowing club and some of the difficulties that they had with the rowing club at Les Galots, that was not my recollection of what went on at that particular time. I think the rowing club were very much supportive of trying to find a solution for the sea cadets and very much wanted to be part of that process but I think it had to be fair for them as well and I think there were some tensions and frictions around the use of the building, which I thought frankly were petty but could have been sorted out by getting people around a table. I think we are long past that point now. We do need to find a solution for the sea cadets. The current building, as the Minister for Infrastructure said, at Fort Regent, I have been there several times both as a member of the steering group for Fort Regent and invited up as the Assistant Minister for Sport to look at the building and it is in a shocking state. It gives the States no credit that we did have them or we still do have them situated at that building. I do not think refurbishing at Fort Regent is an option at the current time until we have a long-term solution for Fort Regent. I cannot see that being an option. As much as moving them to somewhere like the police station might be a short-term option there are other options that we should have explored before now. I am going to go into one, which is on a site that I think has been left for far too long to decay and left in the guardianship of one of our arm's-length bodies and that is La Folie. What has happened at La Folie is nothing short of a disgrace. We should have insisted on Ports reusing that site far before now. I am a big supporter of Ports. I think they have done a good job in our outlying harbours and I think they have got some good plans under the current C.E.O. moving forward for St. Helier harbour but I much prefer to see the sea cadets sited near the sea, as the air cadets are sited near the airport.

[11:30]

For me, one of the sites that should be considered or should be commandeered or requisitioned, or however we want to put it, should be La Folie. There is space there for the sea cadets. The current building could be used as an accommodation block. It is a beautiful building. It is an absolute shame that the building is not currently used. There are options for the sea cadets. There are options that I think are affordable. But getting back to the proposition, I do not think this is the solution for it. I do not think the funding mechanism is right. I think there is a desperate need for a new shooting

range that suits the needs of the police. There are also other shooting groups in the Island that would use that shooting range as well. Again as part of my Sports portfolio I have been connected with and looking at some of the options for the site, but there have been massive issues around the police shooting at other ranges up there and some of the damage that it causes, and I do not think using other ranges is suitable. I think it does need a specific range for the police, whether it is gold or platinum-plated is not an argument I am going to get into, but they do need to have a specific range for the police where they can train locally without having to travel off-Island to do that. I cannot support this amendment although there does need to be something done around the sea cadets and long-term support for the sea cadets who have been very poorly treated over a long period of time, but unfortunately I cannot support this amendment.

#### **2.1.10 Connétable J. Le Bailly of St. Mary:**

I must first admit that I have a vested interest in Crabbé range. Not only is it in the Parish that I administer but I also shoot at the C.I.P.S.A. club, which is based there. C.I.P.S.A. is Channel Islands Practical Shooting Association. We shoot a very similar discipline to the police. However, there are very strict requirements that the police need in order to comply with U.K. police training requirements. The States of Jersey Police and C.I.P.S.A. have intentions of building separate ranges because the requirements are so different. The police cannot use the existing ranges because they need a greater safety cover due to the wider shooting angles that they need in their training. They shoot forward and sideways and the existing backstop does not comply with that. This range is absolutely necessary for police training in Jersey. Long term it will save money in time saved, flights to the U.K., accommodation, *et cetera*. It will provide a local facility that can be used on a more regular basis so the training will be constant and to a higher standard. It is important that they have a range that meets all safety requirements, which of course will need to include toilets and briefing rooms. I fully support that the police have their required range.

#### **The Bailiff:**

Does any other Member wish to speak on the amendment? If no other Member wishes to speak on the amendment, I close the debate and call upon Deputy Higgins to respond.

#### **2.1.11 Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

I am pleased that so many people have spoken up in support of the sea cadet unit. I will just go through some of the points that were raised and then make a final comment. Constable Norman said he is at one with me on this in the sense of the need for the sea cadets to get a permanent headquarters and he has given assurances that he will do various things in next year's 2022 Government Plan to 2024. However, as Deputy Southern made very clear, we know that so many things can come up and will prevent that happening and unless we grapple with this now and deal with it, it will be kicked into the long grass again. I might add that if I lose this proposition then I will be monitoring everything he does and hounding him in the next 2022 plan to honour his promises and undertakings to the Assembly. But I do fear that we do not know what our finances are going to be, we do not know what the other priorities are going to be, and I can see this thing being, as I say, kicked down the road yet again. I will not go through some of the other notes on that. I made some of them yesterday in the other debate about police training and the cost and recovery and so on. Senator Ferguson mentioned how civil servants seem to forget the decisions of the States, and many of us are quite well aware of that. It seems that promises of answers to questions that I am supposed to be getting back never seem to materialise. We even had Senator Pallett on the radio this morning talking about how plans for the skateboard park at Les Quennevais were well-advanced and he thought it was going ahead. He leaves Government a month ago or whatever and all of a sudden it is all reversed. Why? He did not know why. Officers had asked for a study of the South Hill but he had no idea why or who asked for it. I sometimes wonder who actually runs this Island. I certainly do not believe it is the States. Anyway, moving on, Senator Ferguson also mentioned how sites are

always wanted for something else. My fear of her suggestion of going back to Fort Regent is the uncertainty that we have on the Fort Regent site. That is another scandal that has gone on in this Island for decades about what we are going to do with Fort Regent. We keep on being told there is no money in the States pot and we need a private-public partnership but they never materialise, there are no plans. We have no idea whatsoever what is going to happen to Fort Regent and, therefore, there can be no certainty that even if the sea cadets move back there that they would be there for any length of time if the States decide to change it all yet again. Deputy Le Hegarat, okay, I am not surprised she is supportive of the police and the firing range. Deep down I understand the need for it as well. I do believe that they need proper training but I do have a real concern how certain departments and organisations can get funding, irrespective of the economic climate. The Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund is a ring-fenced fund that has been set up under the Proceeds of Crime Law and the police, the judiciary, the Law Officers' Department and certain others in that area can lay claim to money and can get what they want, even when the States budget overall would prevent it happening otherwise. Why is it that they get preferential treatment? I have described it in the past as a slush fund because that is what it seems like to me. Whether it is a nice to have or whether it is essential, you can dip into that fund and get the money, but the Education Department cannot or other departments cannot do that if they have a need. So I think we have to start look forward at this thing. As I said to Members yesterday, I have a proposition that I have drafted. In fact, it is in the Greffe at the moment and they are looking over it and I am asking for some additional information to put into the report, but that is coming and we need to address this fund. Again, if I just explain, the reason why I have taken the funds from the police was not really antipolice. It was just the fact I was looking for a source of funds and knew they could always dip into the Criminal Offences Fund if necessary to top it up. In fact, there is currently £1.9 million in that fund over several years. Okay, she says that she will give 110 per cent support in the future to this. Well, I hope she will honour that next year if we do not get the funds right now. The Constable of St. John, in fact I had not realised - it was very quick research I did to try to get the amendment in on time - that £1.2 million had been put in the Medium Term Financial Plan, £900,000-plus for the building and groundwork. Hearing what he said about the reasons for the site not going ahead or the plan going ahead, he first said he will hold Constable Norman to account if the States do not agree this funding this time, but again he is another Member that I will hold to that. One thing that I am concerned about and there are rumours - and I will say it at this point, but they are from a relatively good source - that there are plans afoot in the future to try to combine the air cadets who are at the airport, the ideal site for them, the sea cadets and the army cadets, who are suffering as well, and try to put them into one headquarters building at some site. You can imagine how long that is going to take and the agreements and disagreements, but one of the problems we have is, as Deputy Tadier said, the Ports, which by the way are a good organisation and support the community, have various plans for the harbour and for the airport. The airport site where the air cadets are is a very valuable piece of land. The idea of La Folie, maybe they have got plans for down there. In other words, our standalone, stand away from the States body, the Ports of Jersey, may have other plans for these things and we may find we have to move all the cadet units around in the future. I hope not because I do believe they support the community and I hope they will support the cadet forces. The Deputy of St. Mary also went over some of the problems with the Les Galots site and he needs a bit more background on that and also believes the police should have a range. Deputy Lewis again gives his support for the police rifle range, does not believe in the funding mechanism and hopes the sea cadets will get a future headquarters. Again, Deputy Southern, I agree with him. It is all wishes and hopes and a million things can come in the way of the sea cadets getting a headquarters next year. Therefore, I do believe we need the States to make a statement to the Government quite clearly that they want the sea cadets to get funding and funding immediately. They have funds that they could do, they have got the reserves. They can always find money for their pet projects. Please allocate some for the sea cadets. Senator Pallett, I have mentioned some of the things he said, and the Constable of St. Mary obviously is supporting the police force and the need for a range. I think in conclusion, therefore, I will just

say that I am going to ask States Members to vote for this proposition anyway, even if they do not think the funding mechanism is correct. If it is not correct, the A.G. (Attorney General) will not sign off on it, as we have been told, in which case let it be an indication to the Government that the States support the sea cadets and a new headquarters. If the A.G. does not allow it to come from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund, then find £1 million to build a new headquarters and let us get on with it and start honouring the promises that we have made.

**The Bailiff:**

Thank you very much, Deputy. Does that complete your speech?

**Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

No, Sir, I am just looking for the other part of it. One of the problems with a debate like this is you are scribbling furiously. I would even say to the Members of the Government who are obviously supporting the party line and supporting the Government’s view of opposing and so on, that it is unlikely that the A.G. is going to agree to this. You can vote for this perhaps with that thought in mind and, again, you can influence others on the Council of Ministers that this is a well-deserving project. I ask for the *appel*.

**The Bailiff:**

I ask the Greffier to place a voting link into the chat and I open the voting and ask Members to cast their votes. If Members have had the opportunity of casting their votes, I ask the Greffier to close the voting.

[11:45]

The amendment has been defeated: 12 votes *pour*, 34 votes *contre* and one abstention in the link with 2 additional votes *pour* noted in the chat.

<b>POUR: 14</b>		<b>CONTRE: 34</b>		<b>ABSTAIN: 1</b>
Senator S. Ferguson		Senator I.J. Gorst		Connétable of St. John
Senator S.Y. Mézec		Senator L.J. Farnham		
Connétable of St. Lawrence		Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré		
Connétable of St. Brelade		Senator T.A. Vallois		
Connétable of St. Peter		Senator K.L. Moore		
Connétable of St. Ouen		Senator S.W. Pallett		
Deputy G.P. Southern (H)		Connétable of St. Helier		
Deputy M. Tadier (B)		Connétable of St. Clement		
Deputy M.R. Higgins (H)		Connétable of St. Saviour		
Deputy of St. Mary		Connétable of Grouville		
Deputy of St. John		Connétable of Trinity		
Deputy R.J. Ward (H)		Connétable of St. Mary		
Deputy C.S. Alves (H)		Connétable of St. Martin		
Deputy K.G. Pamplin (S)		Deputy J.A. Martin (H)		
		Deputy of Grouville		
		Deputy K.C. Lewis (S)		
		Deputy J.M. Maçon (S)		

	Deputy S.J. Pinel (C)		
	Deputy of St. Martin		
	Deputy of St. Ouen		
	Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (S)		
	Deputy R. Labey (H)		
	Deputy S.M. Wickenden (H)		
	Deputy G.J. Truscott (B)		
	Deputy J.H. Young (B)		
	Deputy L.B.E. Ash (C)		
	Deputy K.F. Morel (L)		
	Deputy G.C.U. Guida (L)		
	Deputy of St. Peter		
	Deputy of Trinity		
	Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat (H)		
	Deputy S.M. Ahier (H)		
	Deputy J.H. Perchard (S)		
	Deputy I. Gardiner (H)		

**The Deputy Greffier of the States:**

Those voting *pour* in the chat: Deputy Southern and the Deputy of St. Mary. Those voting *pour* in the link: Deputy Ward, Deputy Alves, Senator Ferguson, Deputy Higgins, Deputy Pamplin, Senator Mézec, Deputy Tadier, the Connétables of St. Brelade, St. Ouen and St. Lawrence, Deputy of St. John and the Connétable of St. Peter. Those voting *contre*: Deputy of St. Martin, the Connétable of St. Clement, the Connétable of Grouville, Deputy Guida, Deputy Morel, Deputy Labey, Deputy of St. Peter, Deputy Le Hegarat, Deputy Lewis, the Connétable of St. Clement, the Deputy of St. Ouen, Deputy Truscott, Senator Gorst, Deputy Wickenden, Deputy Young, the Connétable of Trinity, Deputy of Trinity, Deputy Martin, Senator Farnham, Senator Le Fondré, Deputy Gardiner, Deputy of Grouville, the Connétable of St. Martin, Deputies Perchard, Deputy Doublet, Deputy Pinel, Senator Vallois, Deputy Ash, Senator Pallett, Deputy Maçon, Senator Moore, the Connétable of St. Mary, Deputy Ahier and the Connétable of St. Saviour. The Connétable of St. John abstained.

**Deputy M.R. Higgins:**

Sir, in the chat, Deputy Johnson, the Deputy of St. Mary, said that he voted in haste and in error. However, I will still accept his vote if I can.

**The Bailiff:**

Very well. That does not make a lot of difference.

**2.2 Government Plan 2021-2024 (P.130/2020) ninth amendment (P.130/2020 Amd.(9))**

**The Bailiff:**

We now move on to the next amendment in the running order, which is the ninth amendment lodged by Deputy Ward, and I ask the Greffier to read that amendment.

**The Deputy Greffier of the States:**

Page 2, paragraph (i) – After the words “Appendix 2 – Summary Table 9 to the Report” insert the words – “, with the remaining balance from the Fund to be made available for use by the Minister for Infrastructure to provide for the establishment from 1st April 2021 of a bus pass scheme for all people eligible to pay fares under the age of 21 (for which a charge of £20 per annum should be levied on the individual), with the overall cost of, take-up of, and customer satisfaction with the scheme to be subsequently reviewed by the Minister and the outcome of the review to be published by the end of the third quarter of 2021”.

### **2.2.1 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

I forgive Members who may think we have been here before, because we have and on that occasion the vote was tied, but times have changed and this Government Plan is allocating £3.75 million to LibertyBus in the coming years, a significant spend with no detail on the end point of that funding and no real business case or return for it. In order to look at this proposition again from a different pair of eyes, one might say, I wanted an independent view on how it impacts upon children and whether it fits the commitment to put children first. I asked the National Human Rights Institute for Children on the Island to carry out a child rights impact assessment on the proposal and ensure that we were focused on the rights of the child. It is part of the proposition and I refer Members to the child rights impact assessment, and I really hope they have read it. It is the first one submitted to the Assembly and although it looks like a lengthy document, I am sure I included parts that did not need to be there, so I am sure the system will get quicker as we go. On page 3 of the report it says: “The costs of bus travel for children and young people is a barrier to travel, particularly in relation to accessing education and leisure. Young people often express difficulties with transport in the more rural parts of Jersey. Young people under 17 are particularly dependent upon buses as they are unable to drive and even at age 17 and over the costs of learning to drive and maintaining a car with insurance and running costs can be prohibitively expensive. Some children find it difficult to access services that are predominantly located in St. Helier. The most common barriers to accessing structured activities for children are finances, lack of variety and transport. Transport and getting to places, including the beach, are identified as a significant challenge in all contexts; going to play or hang out with friends or to take part in more structured activities. Lack of local provision for play, cultural and leisure activities meant that public transport becomes a necessity for many.” In summary, the report says: “A good, reliable, affordable bus network, which is punctual, will assist young people to meet with friends and join groups and clubs. It is acknowledged that if young people start using public transport independently at a young age and they have a positive experience, they are more likely to continue to use public transport as they grow into adulthood. The proposals seek to improve the accessibility of bus services through the provision of subsidised travel. This will encourage and improve access to opportunities for children to relax and play. Affordability of bus transport will determine whether children and young people can make the most of the opportunities that improved bus transport offers them. Individuals and families living in poverty often rely on the bus to access services, health, education, leisure and other community services. If the cost of the bus is prohibitive then children and young people will find it more difficult to take advantage of their rights. Overall, it is anticipated there would be positive effects on children and young people as a result of the proposition.” That is what we are here to do. We are here to try to make positive impacts on the population and with the commitment to put children first, a positive impact on young children is something we should take the chance to do. The bus pass would make a significant difference to families. Currently a single fare with a student AvanchiCard is 85 pence; for a week of return fares that is £8.50. For a year of school travel - I estimate 33 weeks - it would be £280. This card would, therefore, save families £260 per year on school bus travel alone. We recently issued an extra £100 for families on income support and £100 for every Islander. This proposed change to bus fares for a significant number is targeted, timely and has a time-limited review for the success and impact of the project. I am not going to go on for a long time because I think the child rights impact assessment includes much of the necessary information. I urge Members to enter the debate with an open mind.

Do not demonise children, as the comments paper does. I must read out the fact that it says that free facilities tend to be abused or not valued. This is not free. You have to pay for the bus pass. It says that: “This can lead to increased vandalism or repair costs, antisocial behaviour results. This can discourage some users and push them back to car usage.” That is a very negative view of our young people. In fact, the experience I have had of young people on the buses is very helpful towards elderly people, giving up seats and so on. I am very proud to have associated with them. We must not demonise our young people. I will finish here by saying the last vote was a 22-each tie. I hope to gain the support of those who did so before and a few more, given the lack of a real sustainable transport policy and a significant spend going to LibertyBus in the next few years. With that, I propose the amendment.

**The Bailiff:**

Is the amendment seconded? **[Seconded]** I open the debate.

**2.2.2 Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier:**

When I read this amendment to the Government Plan, my first reaction was to fire up my laptop and write an amendment to it because I felt that Deputy Ward was falling into the same trap that he did last time he brought forward a proposal to spend money on transport. He prioritised the needs of bus travellers over those transport users who are higher up the hierarchy when it comes to sustainable transport, namely walkers and cyclists. Of course, the Minister for Treasury and Resources herself fell into the same trap in her introductory remarks when she moved the Government Plan. She did talk about supporting transport, and what did she mention? She mentioned the buses. There was no reference from her either about making our Island easier for the vast majority of people who wish to walk safely and conveniently and who wish to bicycle safely and conveniently around our beautiful Island. At this point, I indicated to Deputy Ward that I was proposing to put an amendment in and he asked me to phone him. No, actually I think I asked to phone him. I think it was probably my initiative because I recalled how annoyed he got with me last time I did this. We had a very frank discussion and by the end of that conversation Deputy Ward convinced me that my optimism that the Minister for Infrastructure and the Government themselves were bringing forward far-reaching and adequate resources for walkers and cyclists, as well as for bus users, was misplaced. He invited me to look back over the last 2 decades of my trying to improve the lot of the more vulnerable transport users in our Island and invited me to think about how much priority this Government were giving, and previous Governments had given, to the needs of walkers and cyclists. Surely, he argued, it is better that this Government Plan puts some money where it is needed, young people using the bus service, than no money at all. I have to say that I am persuaded by Deputy Ward’s arguments. I think that his amendment to the Government Plan does at least do something practical. It does something that the Minister has not done and is not doing and Members will have gathered from my comments yesterday on a different subject that I am beginning to despair of this Minister’s ability to deliver for the needs of people who want their children to be able to cycle safely and conveniently and for people who want to be able to walk safely and conveniently around our congested roads. That is why I am supporting Deputy Ward and I recommend that others do so too.

**2.2.3 Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

To contribute very briefly, I am pleased to hear what the Constable of St. Helier has just said, who I think has understood where Deputy Ward is coming from and where increasingly, I hope, other Members are starting to come from now when it comes to this, which is this basic principle that the people of Jersey deserve better when it comes to public transport from what they have got over recent years. The fact is that very, very little has been done recently and there does not appear to be any vision at all for improving the bus service on the Island. On past occasions when Deputy Ward has tried to propose something that would make the bus offer more attractive in terms of a fare structure

or whatever, 2 points have been put back that I think have been flawed. The first of those points is that we have already got a good bus service so stop complaining, which is a terrible argument.

[12:00]

Because, firstly, we should never stop striving for better for our constituents and whether our current bus service is good or not and what it is good relative to is irrelevant. We should always be arguing for better for our constituents and a better bus service is part of that. The second argument is one that the Minister for Infrastructure has made before, when he has got annoyed at me when I have challenged him but I will keep challenging him on it, which is the idea that it is simply up to the best service provider what they do and it is not for this Assembly to try to dictate on it. I think that is undemocratic and misses the point that having a decent public transport system that people are encouraged to use is good for the whole Island in terms of reducing congestion on our roads, getting people out and about, which is a good thing for them and for the whole Island as well. It is in our interests as an Island and our Government ought to be supporting moves to get that way, and that means occasionally telling the bus service that we want more from them, we want better from them, especially when we are paying a huge amount to subsidise them. So I think Deputy Ward's initiatives that he has proposed over the last couple of years to improve the bus service have been good, have certainly been a lot more than what has come out of those who ought to be taking the lead on this. So I will support it wholeheartedly.

#### **2.2.4 Deputy K.F. Morel:**

This is, I hope, a very short speech. It is really just to ask the Minister for Infrastructure, who I think would be the most appropriate Minister, if he would speak on this because I am looking at the proposition or the amendment that is proposed and I am thinking we really do need to get children on buses, we really do need young people to be finding other ways of moving around the Island so that when they are 17 their thoughts are not to immediately jump in the car and start driving. We have had similar propositions to this over the past few years and I am pretty sure - I cannot put my hand on heart - I voted against them because I thought, no, we need this to be done strategically within the Sustainable Transport Policy. In fact, that is the reason I voted against the diesel proposition that Deputy Ward brought yesterday because it needs to be done within the strategic framework of a sustainable transport policy. But as I look at this amendment, there is a lot going for it, I think, including the £20 that would be expected to be paid by those users who benefit from it. So I would like to hear from the Minister responsible as to where the Sustainable Transport Policy is and why I should effectively toe the line and vote against this proposition, because we absolutely do need young people and we need to make the Island attractive to young people. I think that is really, really important and this could be one way of doing that. So all I am asking for is not so much Deputy Ward to respond but the Minister for Infrastructure to respond.

#### **2.2.5 Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier:**

I pressed my button by mistake but I am here now so I will speak. I have a vivid memory of the last time this was debated. It was 11th March, the day after we had our first case of COVID announced on 10th March, just before we went to the C.P.A. A.G.M. (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association annual general meeting). It was a long debate, it was there all day. I did not come in because I was not well. I thought I possibly had a touch of the COVID but it was summer/winter flu. But it was an interesting debate. It was a long debate. It was one item on the Order Paper left and it took all day and, everyone is right, it went to 22-22 and the vote at about 5.40 p.m. A good debate was had so I do not know why people are not wanting to speak, they think it is rehearsed already, but as I slipped my finger to speak, I was just hovering over that, Deputy Lewis, who is much more in the know on this, is going to speak after, as requested, and he probably would have spoken earlier. I just look at this again and if I had been in the Assembly I would have voted against it. I do not know if it covers the right amount of people, if the right amount of research been done. Sixteen to 21 year-



olds work, some earn a lot of money, nothing considered there. We have absolute statutory laws where we must provide benefits, education, everything else, and I do not know if anybody did listen to the Minister for Treasury and Resources at the beginning of the Government Plan about the monies we have got to borrow in the big scheme of things. This is not costed. If it is £1 million or it is £2 million or it is £3 million, just add it to the end of the bill. Sorry, I know most Constables do not work on those premises either because they have to face ratepayers every 12 months to explain what every penny was spent on and we sort of have to do that as well. Well, that is the way I read the accounts; perhaps it is small-minded or do I just follow the rules. So, to me, it should not be, there has been no more work, a report on people here, a report on: "I have got a free ... I should walk but there is a bus coming, I have only got one stop to go, I will jump on it. It is free." It might be stopping a working age person over 21 getting that bus and they will be late for work. We do have a finite amount of buses. We do give them a good ... because we have to and we are increasing it because their takings have been so affected by the COVID, but what do we do? I do not think, as I say, I have got too much more knowledge than there was on 11th March this year. The only knowledge I have is that we have got millions and millions and millions of pounds we have to borrow for things we have to do. Please do not add to it with things that we would like to do and start doing something that ... as I say, how many rich youngsters might be on these buses or even if they are not rich they are taking a bus away from somebody who needs to be on that bus so they get to work on time. I will leave it there. The Minister for Infrastructure is going to speak. I really urge people to do their homework but listen to the overhead figures, stop adding to things that we have got to do statute by statute, and we cannot affect them, can we, because we cannot have any austerity either.

#### **2.2.6 Deputy K.C. Lewis:**

I am delighted to follow the previous speaker, Deputy Martin, who absolutely hit the nail on the head. I am going to set out why I will be opposing this amendment to the proposition and why I would urge all Members to do the same. If this amendment were passed, it will entitle anyone under the age of 21 to travel by bus free, except it would not be free. We would all be paying for it through the Climate Emergency Fund and we do not know how much it would cost. We are, therefore, writing a blank cheque against a fund that is subject to competing interests. If the Climate Emergency Fund were used to pay for free bus travel, there would be an opportunity cost that money could not be used for any other initiative: bicycles, for example, or discounting home heating, tree planting or for carbon sequestration to enhance our natural environment. The question I would ask is this: does the States Assembly really agree that this amendment's proposal would be the best use of the limited carbon neutral strategy funding? I think not and until we are in a position to make informed choices between competing initiatives, I do not believe anyone else does either. So I would ask Members to reject this amendment and enable my officers to remain focused on producing considered, researched recommendations for the future of our public transport network. The bus service development plan is one of the 4 plans that will collectively and cohesively enable me to do the work the States Assembly agreed that I should to deliver the Sustainable Transport Policy. The plans are the active travel plan, the parking plan, the mobility as a service framework plan and the bus service development plan. These 4 action plans are currently out for consultation and I would welcome all Members contributing. You only have to go to [haveyoursay.gov.je](http://haveyoursay.gov.je) to submit your views. I expect the bus service development plan to give us the evidence that this proposition is missing and it will do so within the wider Sustainable Transport Policy. LibertyBus are doing a fantastic job serving the Island. The current bus operating contract places the revenue risk on LibertyBus, meaning their key incentive is to increasing passenger numbers, which they achieve by providing reliable and efficient service. This model has proven to be a great success because it has generated the revenue necessary to underpin the continual expansion of the service to everybody's benefit. By eliminating bus fares for young persons, part of this revenue risk is removed and, therefore, so is the commercial incentive for growth. LibertyBus, quite understandably, will not invest in additional services if they do not have to pay for it themselves. So this amendment could potentially lead to overcrowding on popular

buses, making the service less appealing unless Government fund the additional capacity required. We are not just talking about children in full-time education. The amendment, if adopted, could lead us to having to cover the loss of fare revenue for those under-21s who are in employment. This would impact on the income for LibertyBus from commuting passengers and those who otherwise contribute to the night-time economy, a poorly targeted policy indeed. Our vision is to have a transport system that by 2030 makes our everyday lives better, supports businesses and encourages us and our children to be healthier and our Island to be greener. There is no evidence that this amendment would actually have any effect on the levels of pollution and congestion in Jersey. We know from past research that the cost of fares is not the primary barrier for using buses. We know that when something is free, people will demand more of it. With a heavily discounted travel pass for young persons rather than new users being attracted to the service, the most likely outcome would be the existing users making many more journeys and we know that accommodating additional demand would be expensive. Over time, this amendment risks diverting funding from other sustainable transport initiatives into spiralling operational costs on the public transport network without the prospect of any additional fare revenue. This, of course, would be to the detriment of projects supporting active travel models, namely walking and cycling. The environmental benefits of such a policy are negligible. I recognise that States Members want to see change. I appreciate the importance placed on our bus service by all those who rely on it, and I want to see it thrive in future, but I do not believe that shrinking its revenue base by reducing the proportion of its passengers who pay a fare is the best way to do this. We all want to support our young people but this is not the right way to do it. We risk upsetting the excellent working relationship we have with the bus operator. We risk wasting the funding allocated for sustainable transport purposes and we risk doing that while hindering not helping our vision for transport in Jersey. There have been many mentions of wasted opportunities, the Minister for doing nothing. I just ignore such ludicrous comments by people who should know better. I am doing exactly what the States of Jersey told me to do and that is get the Strong Start Sustainable Transport Policy moving. That is what I am doing. There is some consultation involved but that is the way we have to do it. There are going to be more bike lanes, we have got more electric bikes on the road now. Buses, apart from COVID, was increasing year on year and was the most experienced and, if you like, decorated bus company in the British Isles.

[12:15]

They have won many awards and people have travelled from Westminster to see how they do it in Jersey, such was the success of LibertyBus. As I say, they have been up for many, many awards. This is the jewel in the crown of the Sustainable Transport Policy. There has been lots going on with buses coming on to the radar as the moment. I have mentioned previously about a new eastern route from the bus terminal, which will cut out all the traffic at the roundabouts and come out just before the tunnel, and a short cut on the western route for buses, again cutting down on traffic. There is an awful lot going on. As I say, I ignore all the negative comments because, well, that is politics and you have to do that, but I am doing exactly as the States of Jersey have told me to do, and I am bringing this forward as quickly as I can. For those people who still think I do nothing, watch this space. I will leave it there but my recommendation to Members is vote against this, let me get on with my job and we will put the Island right.

### **2.2.7 Deputy L.B.E. Ash of St. Clement:**

As Deputy Ward said, you have heard this amendment before and you must be relieved that it is not your mind playing tricks with you. It has been slightly tweaked this time, in fact by putting in a £20 admin charge for the card, but it is still pretty much the same free bus pass that was advocated before. What we are seeing is a rather strange scenario. It is sort of Groundhog Day meets EastEnders and I see Deputy Ward standing in front of a market stall: "I have a load of bus tickets. Do not ask me where I got them from because I do not want to have to lie to you but I can tell you they normally retail up west at over £2 apiece. I am not asking £2, lady, even though at £2 you would be doing

yourself a favour. I am not even asking £1. No, I am letting you have them for free.” It is at this time in any market in the real world that people will wander off because nothing is for free and people are naturally sceptical when someone claims it is. They are either trying to offload dodgy goods or there is a catch. Now, I do not feel that Deputy Ward has a stash of counterfeit bus passes so I presume there must be a catch and, of course, the catch is they are not free. They have to be paid for by someone, somewhere, sometime. The question is by whom and maybe it is something that can be addressed in the summing up as to the exact person who is paying. In the past we have had to speculate as to who is going to pay: will it be other bus users whose fares will rise, will it be the taxpayer via the Treasury, or is it by obtaining sponsorship from a major company? This time the amendment has been slightly more specific, saying the money should come from the Carbon Neutral Fund, which is another way then of saying it will be paid for by the taxpayer via the Treasury. The other point that I would like to hear from Deputy Ward in his summing up is how he would explain that many of the 16 to 21 age group will have left school, be in work, living at home with parents and have considerable disposable income to use. Why should those struggling with rent, mortgages or bringing up families subsidise that particular group? I would urge the Assembly to reject this and I look forward to debating it again in 2021.

### **2.2.8 Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour:**

I should begin this debate by declaring an interest. I am a non-driver and I use the bus quite regularly. Of course, I am certainly older than 21. As Members have said, this is a repeat of a debate we have had earlier and, again, the issues that I raised in Deputy Ward’s debate at the time have not really been addressed since and I have not heard, from his opening speech, as to whether those concerns have been taken on board and listened to. What did I say at the time? Again, the Minister for Infrastructure has told us that the evidence they have in the department is that the issue of using the bus is not price sensitive. I would ask could this money be better used, for example for a better bus route, more buses, something that is more responsive to the needs of Islanders rather than necessarily this blanket approach. Again, where is the evidence to suggest that this is the best and most effective thing to do? We know in the previous debate it was argued this is good for the environment and I recall the Deputy St. Martin turning around and saying: “Well, wait a minute, would cleaner buses not be a better use for the environment and a better use of the funds than what the Deputy is proposing?” Again, the point I raised is if we had better bus routes, would that not encourage more people on the bus? Now, the argument seems to have evolved, and this is what I think Deputy Morel has picked up on, that now we are trying to instigate behavioural change to encourage the younger generations of the Island to use public transport. Many already do but, again, where is the evidence to suggest that it is the price that is the primary focus for these young people and not the regularity of the buses, where the buses are going, those types of issues? Again, I do not have the evidence behind this or the analysis behind this to say: “This is the best option out of all of the options.” That just is not present. I know the presenter will come back and say: “Look, I am a Back-Bench Member, I do not have the time and the ability to do the analysis but this is what we have got on the table.” But the Minister and his team are working behind the scenes and doing that type of work and, therefore, coming to present something in the Sustainable Transport Policy. As we heard previously, it is about taking ... because these things are strategic and you need the holistic approach and just doing things piecemeal does not deliver what we all want for the Island. I desperately want a better bus route around the Island for all Islanders and I would love to see more minibuses perhaps circling around the Parishes. We have a much better route during the summer when we have the tourist routes where you can transfer in between things but during the winter it is much more difficult, and do not get me started on what happens and what is available on a Sunday. For me, the holistic approach is essential here and this amendment just does not present that. Of course, as the Minister for the Environment said yesterday, here we go, we have a Climate Emergency Fund and instead of looking at the big strategic issues, pet projects are coming to the fore. Unfortunately, because I do not have the evidence, I will not be supporting this amendment.

### **2.2.9 The Connétable of St. John:**

I was amused by a comment that the proposer made that it would enable youngsters in the rural Parishes to have access to events and, basically, St. Helier. Unfortunately there are very few routes in rural Parishes and so by giving free access to the buses for youngsters will reduce the number of bus services in the rural Parishes rather than the money being used to increase the number of bus services in the rural Parishes. We will be faced with money that could be used in expanding the service and creating better links for rural areas rather than using the money for free transport for youngsters. We have had this debate before. I know it was a very close debate last time but we are having to be very, very careful with every penny we spend, and more so now than ever before. I think we need to stick to the decisions we have made, we need a sustainable transport policy and we need to follow the route that is best for everybody in our community, so I cannot support this amendment.

### **2.2.10 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

We need some sort of sense of perspective on this. It seems to me that the Government Plan is there and received such intense speeches and focus because it is there to put principles into action. It is all very easy and very well to have principles but where is the action? Without the action, the principles are not worth having and the principles we have are contained in the strategic priorities and we have got 5 of those. I am just looking at the document now. The first one at the very top in bright red is: "Put children first." Does this proposal not put children first? It facilitates, assists children to engage with society, get out, have free transport and make social contact, be active. The green button there is: "Protect and value our environment." Again, this is exactly the sort of thing, greater bus use, reduced car use, is exactly what we need and whether that is parents giving people a lift out as the only way to get to town and back from St. Ouen or St. John, to make it easier to use a bus liberates young people, children, absolutely. The pale blue one: "Improve Islanders' well-being and mental and physical health." Certainly the mental health if you are bound by whether you can get out or not and whether you have got access to transport, the whole thing holds together. "Reduce income inequality and improve the standard of living." For those who are poor, for those at the bottom end of the spectrum, then this £20 annual fee with access to the buses is liberating again for those people, largely young people, who maintain our economy, because the last button is: "Create a sustainable, vibrant economy and skilled local workforce for the future." Who is suffering most from the effects of the pandemic? I would argue that it is young people who, by and large, keep our shops open, certainly, and our bars, do the zero-hours jobs, they are most affected and, therefore, would most benefit from this proposal. So, in terms of it being holistic, I think it meets all the priorities we could want. The fact that it is the second time this has come before the House, slightly amended and well-amended, is neither here nor there. It has come again because it is the right direction to take, I would argue. We have put millions of millions of millions of pounds into all sorts of schemes to assist ourselves as we transform from where we are to a post-pandemic society. I think this is one mechanism by which we can put our good words into action. I think the time has come now to accept that this way forward is the way for our bus service and for our young people. I think it is a perfect melange.

### **2.2.11 Connétable R.A. Buchanan of St. Ouen:**

I just have a few comments I want to make about this. One thing about proposals that come about the bus company, and we have had a few of these, is that I remember the previous bus company and the bus company before it and just how bad the service was. Sometimes I think we forget how lucky we are in this Island to have a bus service that runs properly with reasonably clean buses and is reasonably on time.

[12:30]

Indeed, the Minister for Infrastructure made the comment that it has increased usage quite dramatically, so in many ways it has achieved many of the objectives that we have set it. I understand Deputy Ward's motivation in doing this, but I have got 2 questions. Firstly, it seems to be rather untargeted because anyone under the age of 21 can take advantage of it whereas we should be targeting any of these sort of measures at people who really cannot afford to use the bus or who need assistance to use the bus. A lot of people under the age of 21 will be working and will be well able to afford bus usage. The other concern I have is that we have heard the Minister for Infrastructure quite clearly say that the revenue risk lies with the bus company, so from the bus company's point of view this presents them with a few problem. Yes, they will get increased usage but they will not get increased revenue. Deputy Ward hopes the usage is substantial, and we know that on the question of usage when we are in normal times the buses in the mornings are absolutely jammed with people coming into town and so there is not a lot of capacity on a number of the routes running into St. Helier. How will they cope with the extra usage? The only way they can cope is by making a further investment in further buses to put on further routes, for which they will not necessarily have the revenue to do. So, from that point of view it does not seem to be particularly well thought out. The other concern I have is we are dipping into the Climate Emergency Fund and I am very firmly of the view that we should not be using the Climate Emergency Fund on anything carbon-related. It should be used to encourage people to cycle, to walk, for houses and businesses to put in electric boilers and many of the other things we know will have a substantial effect on our climate, our carbon output. This, to me, does not really seem to do that. It is just encouraging people to use buses, when really we want to get people, even youngsters, into the habit of using bikes and walking. For all those reasons, I have a number of issues, which I am sure Deputy Ward will very eloquently sum up at the end, but I really will struggle to support this.

#### **2.2.12 Deputy S.J. Pinel of St. Clement:**

A few people speaking before me have mentioned that there is no cost exercise involved in this amendment and I would just like to put forward a few brief figures that apply to this. First, the risk to the Climate Emergency Fund being raided - unnecessarily, in my view - in this measure. The subsidy is already to the passengers rather than the bus company, which is a tendered service, and the subsidy is already approximately £2.80 for students per journey. Cost implications in this in a normal year, eliminating fares on the school bus network would mean £300,000 of revenue lost, estimated to cost about £700,000 in the first year to ensure the coverage is maintained. The loss of fares from the under-21s, who are not in full-time education, would also run to hundreds of thousands of pounds, and a proportion of night-time economy-related fare revenue. That also shrinks the revenue base to the fare income only from 21 to 65 year-olds. There are a lot of cost effects of this amendment, were it to be agreed, that have not been taken into account, and in a time where a huge amount of money is already having to be borrowed to deal with our current situation, I would urge Members very seriously to reject this amendment.

#### **2.2.13 Deputy M. Tadier:**

I know we have been here before and we have heard so many of the arguments against. Listening to the Minister for Transport - if I can call him that - and I know from hard experience, because I have brought so many propositions to do with buses, including one for disabled, which took ages to get for people with disabilities. There was resistance initially, and then finally the Minister of the day did it - and it was the right thing to do - supported by the Assembly. Similarly with transfer fares, that was done, but it was resisted by the Minister yet again. The *modus operandi* for the Minister seems to be: "I will ask the bus company what they think and when they tell me that they do not like it, I will come back to the Assembly and then I will get my officers to give reasons why we cannot do it." That is not leadership. It is like people are trying to find obscure reasons to vote against something that should be instinctively common sense and the right thing to do, both because it puts our children first - and it is across the board, this is not just for one section - and it is to allow all

young people in that age bracket, if they are willing to pay a certain fee for the subscription, then they get bus travel for free after that, free for them. This argument of course that Deputy Ash put forward to say: "It is not free, somebody has to pay", it is such a hackneyed and tired argument that the Right always trot out. Of course somebody has to pay. That is why we have free schools; the schools are free. You go to them and you do not have to pay a subscription. There was a time when you used to have to pay whatever it was, a thrupenny bit, for the privilege of getting educated, but we decided much more sensible to have something called centralised taxation for the public good, the same with our roads and the same with lots of other things. They are funded because that is the correct way to do it. It is really divisive to try and suggest this is somehow going to mean that someone who is struggling to pay their rent in a one-bedroom flat or a 2-bedroom flat with a kid or a couple of kids is going to find themselves worse off just so that they can pay for some other person's children to have free bus travel, but of course it does not work like that. It is entirely possible and likely that those people who might be having to pay more ... and they do not have to pay more anyway, this is just coming out of general taxation. It is coming out of the environment fund, as it probably should do, but they will benefit from it. If I were the Minister I would go to my department and say: "Look, this seems like possibly a really good idea. It is in line with our commitments to putting children first." Presumably the Minister wants to get more people on the buses, but the way he has been talking and the way other Members have been talking today suggests that they do not want too many people going on the buses because that could be a problem. We also hear these contradictory arguments, saying it will not change any behaviour because all that is going to happen is that the children and young people who are paying currently to use the bus, they will stop paying and they will give £20 for their subscription. Then they will get free bus travel and it will not make any difference, but for the fact that the company is going to be losing fares and the States will have to pay more. But on the other hand, we are saying the Minister is saying: "But what it could mean is that there will be too many people using the buses and bus service will not be able to cope with it." Well, which is it, first of all? Which of those 2 scenarios is it? The way I look at it is that if you are a young person today and you are 17, 18 years old, 19 years old and you have the opportunity to consider whether you might want to start driving, you might want to take lessons, you might want to buy your own car or ask your parents to buy you a car. You might think: "There is this new scheme that has come out and for £20 I do not think I am going to get a car. I think it is quite a lot of hassle because I know that there is maintenance to do with a car. I know that environmentally it is not good to have a car sitting around when you do not need it, and then you have got all the insurance, which is very high. I cannot afford it with my tuition fees. You know what, I think I will give this a go." What it then does, it allows them to have a pattern of behaviour, which is taking them away from what our generation and previous generations have suffered from, which is being car-centric. If Jersey has got one problem, it is the fact that in terms of transport, it is the fact that we are very car-centric. Everything has been built around the car. Now, also I do not think this is a case of country versus town. I do find it strange when some people in the country Parishes complain about having a not very good bus service. The bus services in the country are not bad at all, given the fact that there are not massive amounts of population compared to the conglomerations around the southern coast. It also has to be remembered that the southern routes, they wash their faces. In terms of the subsidies, the subsidy is going already towards the country Parishes because the ridership is such on the southern routes that they effectively pay for themselves without the need of a subsidy, so there is already a cross-subsidy going on between urban residents and urban bus users and those in the country Parishes. There is nothing wrong with that, but that already happens. There is a case of course that you need to plan your day out a bit more. If you have only got a bus that comes past once an hour, it is reasonable that you make sure you get that bus and you plan your day around that. It would be unreasonable to expect to have an urban bus service if you live in a rural area. If you do not like the fact that you have got a poor bus service, then you can always move to town or to Les Quennevais. I see the Constable of St. John has popped up on my screen, but I am not sure if that is for any reason, it could just be one of the vagaries of I.T. (information technology), but I do not think

he wants me to give way and I am certainly not inviting that. The way I look at this is that this is something tangible that we can do in encouraging children ... and to say that we do not want children travelling on buses and young people travelling on buses because we would prefer them to be travelling on their bikes or on foot, or presumably on these unregulated scooters, because they are really popular, or do we want our children travelling in unregulated taxis, in the taxis that they might provide in their own cars, which they have bought because they need to subsidise the insurance and the fact that they are paying for a car when they do not need a car? I think this ticks all the boxes. I think this is about small steps. Remember what Deputy Guida said during the debate on electoral reform. He said: "It is better to do things by an evolution rather than a revolution" and the scientific method is that you change one variable and then you see if it has worked. I think this is exactly what we have got as a case in point. We can give this option to young people for a fee. Not everyone is going to take it - it will not necessarily suit all of them - and they can try it and they can see if they like using the buses rather than using their cars. If it works, we can say: "Great" and after a year we can find out exactly how much it cost so we can decide whether we want to carry on doing that as a Government. This idea again that it is going to spoil the relationship we have with the bus contractor, I think it is looking at it through the wrong end of the telescope. The contractor and the Government should be working as one in this. The contractor is exactly that, they are providing a service, but Government is the customer. It should not be the tail wagging the dog and the contractor saying: "We do not like this. This is what we are going to provide and if you do not like it, tough." There should be a collaborative effort going on between the bus provider, saying: "What is it you want from us?" We are really keen and eager to help you, and if you can tell us what it is that you expect us to deliver, including this, then let us try and help you do that." I would ask Ministers, especially the ones who would normally be minded to support this kind of pro-environment, pro-young people approach, to not regard the ministerial whip that has been put on them and devote with this not just with their heart, but also with their head, because it does make sense, I think, on all levels.

**The Bailiff:**

Thank you very much, Deputy. We are within a minute or so of reaching that point where I call on Members to decide whether they wish to adjourn over the luncheon. There are 2 other Members indicating a desire to speak. It may be that ...

**LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT PROPOSED**

**The Bailiff:**

The adjournment is proposed. Does any Member object to an adjournment at this point? The Assembly stands adjourned until 2.15 p.m.

[12:43]

**LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT**

[14:18]

**The Deputy Greffier of the States (In the Chair):**

We are going to resume the meeting and next on the list is the Deputy of St. Martin.

**2.2.14 The Deputy of St. Martin:**

When the Minister addressed us he said that the position here is not the primary reason that people will get back on buses. I am sure he is right. We were then told that this proposition, as we can see, targets people under 21, some of which will not need to have free passes and we should be better targeting those who genuinely cannot afford to pay to go on public transport, and that is right as well. Then we are told we should be promoting walking and cycling, and I could not agree more. The problem is that the Minister tells us this is not the primary reason to get people back on buses but he does not tell us what the primary reason is, let alone he does not get on do whatever it is that is the

primary reason. Yes, I am sure there are some people in this proposition under 21 who will be able to afford to travel on buses but some will not and this proposition at least goes some way towards addressing that. Finally, while we might do our very best to encourage walking and cycling, surely we are not trying to discourage people from going on buses when what we must try to do is to get them out of their cars and reduce the amount of traffic on our roads. This proposition may not be ideal but at least is trying to do something positive. We forget this States Assembly has decided to declare a climate change emergency and we have seen no action whatsoever. Is it surprising that Member are frustrated and all we need to see is some positive action? I just want to get the message across that I am in favour of anything that starts to make a difference and say to the Minister: "Come on, we need to do better than this." While this proposition may not be perfect, at least it is trying to address the subject.

### **2.2.15 Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I think I am glad to follow the last speaker. I do disagree with what he is saying but at least I can try and address some of the remarks. Part of the problem is I am trying to understand what Deputy Ward is trying to achieve by bringing this proposition or bringing this amendment. As we all know, it is very similar to one he did previously. The issue is, is it social policy, i.e. we are trying to allow people to have cheaper bus fares, or in this case free bus fares, or is it environmental policy, in other words trying to achieve, which is what I understood the case was, to switch users from carbon intensive modes of transport to less carbon intensive. The issue with what is being proposed (a) I am not quite too sure what the Deputy is trying to achieve out of those 2 objectives, but (b) if it is around behavioural shift and behavioural activity generally it just does not work. I am going to talk to that a little bit more. The point is that Climate Emergency Fund was particularly put in there to deal with essentially, yes, immediate measures to put through and some of those are starting to take place. For example there are improvements, for example, in St. Helier Midvale Road is one where work is scheduled to start next year and that will include cycle-friendly areas and pedestrian-friendly areas. That is about making cycling in St. Helier easier as well as improving the environment, investing in St. Helier, and obviously the Regeneration Steering Group also approved the Hill Street work, which is again an extension and a route for cyclists to separate themselves from traffic. That was publicised within the last couple of weeks. Even just before COVID greater covered cycle racks, *et cetera*, were also being mooted. So there are measures that are coming together and part of that is being funded out of the sustainable transport programme, which is partially being funded through the Climate Emergency Fund. The Climate Emergency Fund as well was about long term because it is aimed to get the Island to a carbon neutral position by 2030 and that was the very laudable aim of the Deputy. But to do that one needs to fund it and one needs to fund it in such a way that that long-term work can happen. If one keeps dipping into, and I think the analogy previously was a bit like a sweetie tray, then there will be no sweets left and there will be no work done to achieve the long-term objective of achieving the carbon neutrality aim. This is in the order I am advised of around £750,000, is what we are talking about. I will come back to evidence shortly and behavioural change but I do want to talk about LibertyBus because obviously they are also the brunt of part of this debate. I just want to absolutely state that certainly from my perspective they provide an absolutely excellent service. The reason I have put it that way, I had the pleasure actually of being in the Department of Transport and Technical Services, in those days, as the Assistant Minister under the present Minister as Minister, and that was when the handover took place between the previous bus operator to LibertyBus. The stories that emerged at that point were, from my memory, absolutely horrific. They were of very dated and poor working practices, poor health and safety approaches and the list went on. Indeed it is my recollection that we were informed under the new operator, even though passenger numbers had fallen, the cash take had actually increased. I probably will not dwell on that any further but that was the kind of nature and problems that was being encountered by the new operator coming in and taking over from the old operator. What we have now is a truly excellent service, to the extent - I will just look at a note I have been passed - that the office of the U.K. Secretary of State for



Transport has recently been in touch with our department to better understand the success of the Jersey bus contract model. What that says to me is that both the officers who basically designed the contract in the first and continue to manage that contract and the operator are working hand in glove exceptionally well to provide a good bus service. Indeed as we hear often, the number of passengers had increased by about 40 per cent from those first early days. That is a huge mark of success. That is why I place a lot of faith in the officers that do deal with buses. They know the subject. I remember Deputy Tadier came up with a wonderful story and picture of what people might think. As I say, he painted a wonderful scenario about why this was such a good idea. I understand his argument, except it was, I think, people might think ... he went through the scenario, there was no evidence. The evidence is that this does not work. The summary point is that the evidence from studies - I think the ones that spring to mind are Belgium and London but I am sure I have read of some others - where free bus services have been provided, what one actually sees is people who walk and cycle in, for example, to work or wherever they are going in their daily commute, switch to travelling by bus so therefore the carbon impact is worse. That is the behavioural change that we need to understand before we just jump in. That is why it is important to make sure we fully understand the facts, not the political positioning because somebody thinks that it might work and it might be a good idea. Potentially we make things worse. Not only do we, based on the evidence of other jurisdictions, encourage people to stop the carbon neutral activity they are doing, i.e. walking or cycling, and getting on to a bus but, of course, that then causes congestion and you end up in a downward spiral where you have increasing demand, increasing costs because you then need to lay on extra buses and then, of course, that starts competing because there is no revenue coming in ... that then starts causing a different problem. Indeed - and I am just referring to some different notes - what we see at the moment, which is a virtuous cycle, that the revenue that is generated by the fares allow for growth of resources, which allows the demand to be met but also keeps a comfortable level of service for all the users. That, for example, is what has contributed in the past to the 40 per cent increase in ridership that we have seen. What we then see is if something becomes free then it becomes rationed because it is then competing with other government funding. For the sake of argument, a new Assembly in 3 years' time might turn around and say: "We need to put an extension on to a new school and our priority is that rather than funding free bus travel." What we have also seen, particularly for example in the U.K., is that the U.K. does give away free travel to many groups but the result often is that there is not enough money to provide the service. You sometimes end up in a position, when you have pensioners in rural locations in the U.K. with a free bus pass but they do not have a bus service. That is the kind of example that we sometimes see. Whereas if one is trying to achieve social policy, it is better doing that through the social security and income taxation systems because free public transport is a far less efficiently focused way of getting funding to low-income households. I think the fundamental reason for me for not supporting this is the ... it may sound completely counterintuitive but the fact that based on the research elsewhere, giving free bus travel to bus riders essentially tends to mean that we end up with less cyclists and less walkers because it is easier for them to travel by bus and because it is free. In other words, this is contrary to the objectives that the Deputy is likely to be seeking to achieve, i.e. obviously reducing the carbon footprint of this Island.

[14:30]

By also dipping into the Climate Emergency Fund, which is what he is suggesting in his proposition, which is: "With the remaining balance from the fund [so it is not limited] to be made available for the establishment of a bus pass scheme." I am informed it is in the order of £750,000, obviously because of the way the proposition is worded it is an unlimited amount to the maximum amount of the fund therefore it would potentially clean out the fund, which would then inhibit the work, for example, of the citizens' assembly and all those other pieces of work which are focused on delivering the objective of being carbon neutral by 2030. That is not something that I would hope that this Assembly would support. For all those reasons, I do urge Members not to be supporting this proposition.

## **2.2.16 Senator T.A. Vallois:**

May I be the first to thank Deputy Ward for completing a children's rights impact assessment, extremely useful document and informative as we should be expecting going forward. Based on the children's rights impact assessment is the reason for me speaking. Page 15 of the report to Deputy Ward's proposition, there is made reference to understanding the views of children and young people in relation to this project. It refers to the Commissioner of Children and Young People carrying out an Island-wide survey in 2018 stating children asked for more frequent and affordable buses, better public transport featured in the top 11 of children's priorities. Also what children thought about this project. I particularly referred to that because, of course, it notes in that particular section that these views are unlikely to be homogenous and may vary between specific groupings of young people, so tried to capture the range of views. It refers to not having many regular bus routes for a link to town and the only bus that passes the area is the number 4 and is very irregular. By not having a regular bus route and not being able to drive, it is very difficult to meet people in town or other parts of the Island. I recognise and sympathise with that point of view because I have been approached by young people with regards to concerns at the supply available to meet the demand, particularly in our 6th form areas. I am also concerned that the bus pilot that was done for Highlands I do not believe was sufficient to provide meaningful data to put on the appropriate bus provision for those young people who access those particular facilities. Recently there was a report published, in August this year, by Statistics Jersey and this is a report that has been providing feedback from children, among school-aged children, year 4, year 6, year 8, year 10 and year 12. The report was named the Jersey Children and Young People Survey Report 2019. Chapter 15 refers to transport. I refer to page 90 and when we are talking about evidence and facts I refer to figure 15.5 and a question about why they do not regularly use the bus. 50 per cent stated that they walked to school, only 8 per cent of them stated that the bus fare was too expensive. What was particularly concerning was the fact that they feel they may get picked on or they have been picked on - 6 per cent of them; also the fact the bus leaves too early in the morning - 13 per cent; which drives home, too, the responses we heard from a particular teenager in the survey from the impact of lockdown and school closure who preferred to not having to get up so early as a positive and still be able to do their school work because getting a bus from the west of the Island to school was having them to get up so early in the morning, and if C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills) was to be believed, this of course could have an impact on a developing teenage brain. In terms of the report that I have referred to from Statistics Jersey, figure 15.7 on page 91, also refers to why they do not like to get the bus. It refers to the behaviour of children on the bus, the bus leaving too early in the morning and why they refer to why they do not like to get the bus: the bus fare is too expensive, refers to 22 per cent of those. The reason why I wanted to speak is because I felt it was important. People kept on talking about facts and evidence. I have referred to the latest report in terms of Statistics Jersey publishing that in August in this year and also the concerns that have been raised either directly with me or through various other surveys that we have done recently. I would also like to make the point in terms of environmental impacts. The work that has begun and continues to go on in terms of Bikeability, with the support of Sports Jersey, which is under the Sustainable Transport Policy, which will deliver what we understand, most of us understand, is cycling proficiency which will hopefully provide the confidence for our young people being able to access school going forward by using their bikes on our roads. I recognise the argument of the Deputy of St. Martin that we need to see positive action. I am not sure whether providing what Deputy Ward is asking for here is the appropriate action for all the reasons and the facts of the evidence that I have just relayed from surveys and reports. Out of the mouths of children we have asked to provide feedback, children and young people we have asked to provide feedback. On that basis I do not feel that I can support this but recognise that we need to move much more swiftly and quickly, more so around the frequency and the offering for our bus services and I would particularly, as you would understand, from an education point of view, want

to ensure that those of our young people, particularly 6th form and college, can access schools in a timely and appropriate manner.

**2.2.17 Deputy R.E. Huelin of St. Peter:**

If at first you do not succeed, try, try, try again. Simple motivator for the young when trying to demonstrate the benefits of hard work. Or I can quote the more philosophical view of Albert Einstein: “The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but expecting different results.” The only thing that has changed in this latest iteration is the £20 a year charge, a financial gesture towards administration but not a material change. I think on version one of this, which was proposed by Deputy Tadier earlier on in this term, I voted against and said as much because no consultation had been made with LibertyBus. This is quite important as we as an Assembly ask them to provide a service. A service, as we have heard, they provide extremely well and, importantly, we are asking them to review this service. I suggest that if we are going to give them an open cheque, less £20, for under 21 from the Climate Emergency Fund, we would like to understand their options, all options, as to how this money could best be used towards delivering what the fund is for. It could be that it results in increased usage by these under-21s, which in turn will be an increase in services, which in turn means more bus mileage, which in turn means more diesel being coughed out in the atmosphere. Or they could use the money to invest in electric buses, which I appreciate has been trialled. We all know that the manufacturing of batteries requires electric vehicles to have a lot of usage before they become more carbon efficient than their fossil fuel counterparts. The point is neither of these suggestions reduce our carbon footprint, certainly not in the near term and not in a sustainable way, yet we want to spend the Climate Emergency Fund on it. To me this is illogical. Quite frankly, a little bit mad. Now, while I am sure we all appreciate the principle, if we are going to use the Climate Emergency Fund, let us use that money to look at ways to help our young get around the Island without burning more carbon, and that is the purpose of the Sustainable Transport Policy. As Deputy Ash said, I look forward to the next version of this in the spring.

**2.2.18 Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade:**

I am not going to repeat the same message in any detail that I gave yesterday about my concerns over the way we use this fund. Exactly as the previous speaker says, we have to remind ourselves of what it was set up for. But equally I am not going to criticise Deputy Ward because persistence is ... God loves a trier, as it were. But, look, we are all frustrated, we desperately want changes to our bus service. We want to see new and changed routes, we need greater frequencies, we need alternative vehicles, dare I would say, not just E.V.s (electric vehicles) but also what about hydrogen power buses, which one sees in other places being tried. The key is more interconnectivity so, for example, we do not have a structure where every bus has to go through Trafalgar Square and change the route and so on. We have rehearsed that *ad nauseum*. We have not got there yet but if we had a high-tech system then we could have, as other societies have done, free public transport. We could have, as Iceland did yesterday; Iceland announced that the very youngest children - not for 21 - in their society similar, and other societies have done the same. But these societies are charging high amounts of tax and they make major decisions that Government itself will make the investments required in order if they are to achieve carbon neutrality. We do not have that. Of course it was the Deputy, and I congratulated him, it was a great visionary thing, who came forward with the goal of carbon neutrality, which we signed up to, and then as an Assembly we signed up to our means of achieving it. We do not have £300 million to spare, or we did not have at that time, we do not want to borrow it and so what we are going to do is we are going to look at carrot and stick measures to bring in environmental taxes for those who pollute and those who do not change behaviours, and we are going to find financial incentives to support and encourage behavioural change in those that do. To do that we need a pocket of money called seed corn finance to oil the wheels of that process. That is what we do. My fear now, and I am really troubled about this, because this particular proposal provides a subsidy, a subsidy of a particular group ... and of course I ask, well, is this proposal about reducing

inequality or encouraging children? In which case that is a perfectly valid objective but should it be funded from the arrangements of the whole basis we set up about achieving environmental gain because there are huge tasks to do here. Members will know, of course, if I had had my way we would be looking at vehicle road tax by now, we would be looking even at congestion charging through complex technology to do things about managing the escalating of traffic. I think there is potential there for £10 million, £15 million and even higher but we have not got there. We have a small amount of duty on road fuel which is going to go into a fund and we have already committed ... in the Government Plan today there is significant money from that fund already going into sustainable transport. That is not my programme, the Minister is doing that. So to say nothing is happening is not true. Is it enough? Absolutely no, it is not. Of course it is not but if we just haemorrhage that fund where is the money going to be to be able to look at things like achieving major changes on phasing out gas and oil in people's homes. Where is the money going to be for that? We do not have any structures to do that. I am disappointed because last year we agreed, the Minister for Treasury and Resources agreed, that we would be looking at it this year but it has not been able to happen. I do not want to play the same old tune but why has it happened? COVID has messed us all up but nonetheless it is going to have to be done. I give notice now, if we do not see these measures coming forward in the States, for the States to make decisions about those real money-raising measures to drive this process, I will bring propositions myself next year if we do not see it. I have confidence that we will see it because I do not think there is a case for being deflected from the plan. Are we going to see under this method ... what will be the change? Will that reduce the impact on vehicles? I do not think it will, I am not hearing that.

[14:45]

I think the Deputy himself even said this is a minor point. I just throw this in for what it is worth, he did say that young people do not drive. Well, in that case where is that going to impact on vehicles. The key thing is when we have these schemes they need to be targeted. Targeted on what we are trying to achieve. This fund that is proposed to be used is for achieving environmental benefits. In this I congratulate the Deputy, he has been a lead player and I hope in the future he will not give up and carry on pushing but, rather than put in proposals which I think sadly do not exactly fit the bill for what we need ... and, of course, in the future I hope he will be very much around and possibly put himself forward for the role of Minister for the Environment in the future but, I am sorry, this one is not right for me and I cannot sign up to it.

### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

Does any other Member wish to speak on this amendment? If no other Member wishes to speak, I call upon Deputy Ward to reply.

### **2.2.19 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

I thank most people who spoke, but not the ones who launched personal attacks. That is a tactic of this Government and we take it on the chin, do we not? Where do I start? I have about 5 pages. I have an unlimited time, have I not? Why do I not just take advantage of that? Deputy Young, thank you, the problem is you have not brought any propositions, there has been nothing brought by Government. You have a fund, you are employing people to look at things, to consult, to come up with a plan by the end of next year, which will not be acted upon because we will be in purdah and then nothing will happen before the next election. So what will have happened is an entire ministry where very little has happened towards addressing the Climate Change Fund. Indeed, you did not even bring the climate change emergency proposition, I did, a Back-Bencher. One of these outsiders who are just up for attack whenever they bring anything. That is okay because we are here to do the right thing. As my mum always said to me: "Doing the right thing is not always the easiest" so I remember that. In fact it reminded me of my mother, some of things that have been said in these arguments because I can always remember my mum coming up with some very strange arguments

that did not make any sense, they made so little sense about certain things when I was a child that you had to believe them. For example: “Do not run around without your shoes and socks on because you will get a cold in the kidneys.” Now, it took me years of science training and teaching to realise that is not true. She just made it up at the time to get me to put my shoes and socks on, to get what she wanted. So a nonsensical argument just to get what they wanted or to stop me doing something. Well, there you go, that is a very clever parallel drawn, is it not? I am getting good at this. I would like to thank the Constable of St. Helier for his support this time. I know he probably does not think this at times when we have a chat, but having a frank chat and a debate and having a little dingdong is very enjoyable because he is an intelligent enough man and articulate enough man to put his case across. It is a pleasure to interact with something on a level that is decent, as opposed to some of the interactions that we have in this Assembly. Where do I start? I will try and put some of the negatives together because they can be dealt with. I am very disappointed in the Minister for Education and the Assistant Minister for Education who are effectively voting against free transport to school for children. I find that extremely disappointing. I am very pleased the Minister for Education recognised the child rights impact assessment because it does not seem that Deputy Maçon did. He talked about evidence and I do not even know what type of evidence he wants. You cannot just provide evidence to say this will happen in a system like this without making a change. Within the proposition is a review of the uptake and the success of this, an action review of what is going on, whether we are doing the right thing, which will provide evidence. But the evidence that has been provided is the impact on children and, as the Minister for Children and Housing, that should be taken into account surely otherwise it does not bode well for that office. The child rights impact assessment makes it very clear that there are real positives to this for children up to the age of 21. Let me address that issue that came up regards people up to the age of 21 travelling; they might be working, they can afford a bus, but you know what, they cannot afford much else on this Island because they are not going to afford somewhere to live, are they? They are going to have to stay with parents or try and put away thousands and thousands and thousands of pounds in order to put a deposit on a shoebox that they might live in before they can move on. Perhaps taking the burden of travelling to school means they might be able to save some of that for their future because that is a difficult situation for them to be in and they have been hit by COVID. Also this is targeted. It is targeted to a section of our population that will, in the future, determine the form of transport around the Island. Young people getting on to the bus early and having that as their go-to system of travel to get across the Island is very important. I absolutely and totally disagree with this notion that if you make buses free people who cycle in every day will stop doing it. There is absolutely no evidence for that whatsoever. Cyclists cycle for all sorts of reasons. I have a car and we are provided with free parking. The reason I cycle in is because I can do with the exercise. Many people cycle because they want to exercise. It is the people coming out of cars and on to the bus that will make a significant difference, particularly around times when they are going to school. If you look at what is happening at the moment with schools, because nobody is going to school, only 25 per cent are going to secondary schools, there is no traffic on the road around school times and everything is moving more smoothly. What we have here is a lack of joined-up thinking. It is shown by the supposedly Sustainable Transport Policy. Let me get on to Deputy Lewis and, yes, it is not fair, Deputy Lewis, you are the Minister for doing nothing. That is not very nice. The problem we have is that I am afraid I do not believe that anything really happened. I believe a significant number - I hope more than 25 Members of this Assembly - also believe nothing will happen with the Sustainable Transport Policy and so may step up to the plate today and vote for something that is a significant change, that will do something. The idea that the money is coming from the wrong place or it is slightly misdirected, I did not see the Minister, the go-getting Minister, bring an amendment to this to try to improve it and say: “I will tell you what, it is a good idea and we could trial this for one year and we can take the money from this separate fund or we could do this and then we could really get it to work.” But he did not do that, he just left it. At the same time, the Government is writing a cheque for £4 million to LibertyBus with absolutely no responsibility for where that money goes. £4 million. When suddenly there is not ... £700,000 to

give a bus service for £20 for those under 21 and changes people's lives is not worth it but £4 million go into the coffers, and we do not know where that money is going. There is no reassurance from the Minister that it is not simply going back to the HCT Group who run buses elsewhere. Senator Le Fondré, when you talked about the bus service being so wonderful, yes, it is. It is creating revenue and it is creating revenue for buses in Bristol and Manchester and London through the HCT Bus Group before it returns. We have allowed that to happen with the negotiation of the contract, which I believe is pretty poor. So the Minister for Infrastructure, or whatever it is called now, talked about risk. The risk that we have is that nothing will happen. When he talked about the plans he said consultation again - 4 times - a parking plan, a bus service user plan consultation. We are going to consult and consult and consult like we have in education but we have seen no change. We have a year left and then we get into the term just before the elections when everybody will be talking about the things that they have done, although I think the vast majority in terms of this proposition have done very little at all, particularly the Government. This notion that people will get off their bikes and not walk, it is completely nonsensical. Let us think about this logically. If we can encourage people not to start the process of the love affair with the car then I suggest that what we would do is get more people out of their cars, less cars on the road would mean that more people feel they can cycle safely and cycling proficiency is not the way to solve this problem, by the way. You might be able to encourage people but if the roads are dangerous they are simply not going to go on the roads. Less cars, more cycling and more walking. Then you get a positive spiral, not the downward spiral of negativity and we cannot do this, it will not work, we will be squandering money and we cannot spend the Climate Change Fund because it will not do anything about climate. Even though we are not doing anything with the Climate Change Fund. But a positive spiral of behavioural change. Let us move on to the Chief Minister, always an interesting one. When the Chief Minister talked about whether it is a social or environmental impact, it is an interaction of both. It is a very difficult thing, I suppose, you are interacting 2 different variables here. You are looking at the social impacts of saving money for families on low incomes and, yes, it will address income equality because if you save that amount of money for all families it is a disproportionately positive effect on those on lowest incomes. Therefore it can do something about that. An environmental impact is there. When we talk about the fuels that are used we could use biofuels of course in the buses, that would be a really positive step forward as well, and a creative step forward. Therefore you would lower the carbon impact significantly so it would be a social and environmental impact, a complex problem. I suppose it requires formal operational thinking in Piagetian terms but I think we need to remember there are 30 to 40 per cent of population who never reach that level thinking, so perhaps that is the issue. I think one of the biggest problems that we have is that we are not going to have any real impact on making a change to climate during this entire Assembly, after the Assembly voted for a climate change emergency. We are going to do that because there is a sticking point within the Assembly and the sticking point is a group of people who believe that the only way to do this - and they want to do this without any cost, without any impact and really not to address climate change but make a token gesture towards it - is to say: "Actually we want to address climate change but we want to do it without spending any money whatsoever so the best way to do that is put out lots of consultations and pieces of documentation and say: 'Okay, we cannot do anything about it but we are doing something about.'" £600,000 on the Communications Department extra each year. That shows the Government's priorities. Not in action but in talking about action, in P.R. (public relations), in spin, in saying that we are going to do something, in giving an impression, which is shown by the COVID response where we are getting mixed messages. Deputy Pinel talked about the costs. She has millions at her disposal for the emergency for a positive impact on our society but did nothing to this amendment to come and suggest a funding stream, instead just decided to stand up with the Government party who have obviously been whipped in to voting together, to criticise yet again. Then we get to the personalised arguments of Deputy Ash who wants ... I do not know if it is a form of strange cultural appropriation that he wants to go through. Read the child rights impact assessment. I suggest you read it because there is another one coming with the school meals thing

as well. They should be part of the Government's process but they are not because, yet again, they are paying lip service to it. My notes have got a bit mixed up. I was hoping to be a little more put together than this. We have dealt with most of the negatives. We have dealt with the negatives in terms of the constant notion of a cost. Deputy Martin, I do not expect anything positive from Deputy Martin when she speaks about anything that I do. Deputy Huelin, an open cheque. Yes, there is an open cheque, it is £4 million over the next 3 years to LibertyBus, £2 million next year, £1.2 million after that and then £0.5 million something after that. Look in the Government Plan annexe. There is money being given to the bus company with no appropriate accounting for what it is going to be spent on. We do not know if it is going to go back to central coffers and fund someone else's bus service. That is poor accounting and that is a poor use of States money. But now let us talk about the positives.

[15:00]

It is clear that when we consult with the Children's Commissioner and the child rights impact assessment, and we talk to children then they want to go on the bus, they want a cheap bus service, they want one that perhaps is free that they can use when they need to, that they can be with their friends and travel to school. Families will be impacted positively. I would take a cost of over £200 a year from them that could be spent on other things for their family in such difficult times, rather than giving £100 card to everybody to spend on whatever they want; that is real money that goes back to the families directly. This would have an impact because if it takes cars off the road it means it lowers our carbon emissions. Not only that but it culturally changes people's behaviour. It says that we as a Government will give priority to public transport, that we are saying to people: "If you use public transport, we do not believe that you should have to pay for it if you are under 21 because we want to encourage you to use that public transport for the rest of your life. What is needed here again is leadership and I am afraid leadership is not coming from the Chief Minister on this, leadership is not coming from the Minister for the Environment on this, leadership is not coming from the Minister for Infrastructure on this, and leadership is not coming from the Department for Education on this. Instead we have excuses and reasons why we cannot do something. We need a more positive attitude in this Assembly, an attitude towards positive change and positive actions that allow our young people to have the best start in life that they possibly can. I ask the Assembly again to vote in favour of this change, get it working, get it in action and then after a year we can review and see where it is. If it needs to be changed then I will support that change but at this time we have no change. Nothing is happening, we are not addressing climate, we are not addressing transport and we are not putting children first. I ask for people's vote and I ask for the *appel*.

### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

In a moment the Greffier will place a vote in the chat channel of this meeting. The vote is now open and I ask Members to cast their votes. If all Members have had the opportunity to cast their votes then I ask the Greffier to close the voting. The amendment has been rejected in the link: 17 votes *pour* and 26 *contre*. Three more votes in the chat making 18 votes *pour* and 28 votes *contre*.

<b>POUR: 18</b>		<b>CONTRE: 28</b>		<b>ABSTAIN: 0</b>
Senator K.L. Moore		Senator I.J. Gorst		
Senator S.W. Pallett		Senator L.J. Farnham		
Senator S.Y. Mézec		Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré		
Connétable of St. Helier		Senator T.A. Vallois		
Connétable of Grouville		Connétable of St. Clement		
Connétable of St. Peter		Connétable of St. Lawrence		
Connétable of St. Martin		Connétable of St. Saviour		
Deputy G.P. Southern (H)		Connétable of St. Brelade		
Deputy M. Tadier (B)		Connétable of St. John		
Deputy of St. Martin		Connétable of Trinity		

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (S)		Connétable of St. Ouen		
Deputy of St. John		Deputy J.A. Martin (H)		
Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat (H)		Deputy of Grouville		
Deputy J.H. Perchard (S)		Deputy K.C. Lewis (S)		
Deputy R.J. Ward (H)		Deputy J.M. Maçon (S)		
Deputy C.S. Alves (H)		Deputy S.J. Pinel (C)		
Deputy K.G. Pamplin (S)		Deputy of St. Ouen		
Deputy I. Gardiner (H)		Deputy R. Labey (H)		
		Deputy S.M. Wickenden (H)		
		Deputy of St. Mary		
		Deputy G.J. Truscott (B)		
		Deputy J.H. Young (B)		
		Deputy L.B.E. Ash (C)		
		Deputy K.F. Morel (L)		
		Deputy G.C.U. Guida (L)		
		Deputy of St. Peter		
		Deputy of Trinity		
		Deputy S.M. Ahier (H)		

### **2.3 Government Plan 2021–2024 (P.130/2020): fifteenth amendment (P.130/2020 Amd. (15))**

#### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

The next amendment listed in the running order is the fifteenth amendment lodged by Senator Moore and I ask the Greffier to read the amendment.

#### **The Deputy Greffier of the States:**

Page 2, paragraph (i) - After the words “Appendix 2 - Summary Table 9 to the Report” insert the words - “, with the remaining balance from the Fund to be made available to allow for the introduction of a scheme whereby the G.S.T. (Goods and Services Tax) paid on the following items may be refunded, with the Minister for Treasury and Resources requested to introduce such a scheme with effect from 1st January 2021: (i) photovoltaics and solar panels, (ii) ground and air source heat pumps, (iii) electric boilers, (iv) electric cars, motorbikes, scooters and vans, (v) electric bikes and cargo bikes, (vi) loft and cavity wall insulation, and (vii) double glazing.”

#### **2.3.1 Senator K.L. Moore:**

I am pleased to be bringing this amendment today because the Economic Council’s report is being published this afternoon and in it the Economic Council talks - their wide-ranging report - about the importance of sustainability for the future of the Island, particularly as we recover from the COVID crisis. Many groups of people during COVID have been talking about the importance of a green recovery, in particularly the World Economic Forum who have conducted weekly discussions about the great reset, which has been very interesting. It goes to show the international movement and enthusiasm for the sustainability issues and for the importance of an environment response. The subheading of this Government Plan is the Recovery Plan. Sadly, there is very little in the plan about recovery. There is even less about environmental aspects of Island life, which is why I decided to bring this amendment in my own name rather at the last minute. It was after we went to print that I realised that it is very similar to the proposition that Deputy Ward successfully brought to the Assembly last year but despite his success last year - and I commend him for it - that proposal has not been brought forward due to COVID. So I hope that in bringing this amendment there is a slightly simpler alternative to Deputy Ward’s proposition of last year in terms of encouraging people to switch energy usage to greener and cleaner alternatives that will inevitably reduce their costs as well. We all understand that the cost of living is an important aspect of Island life. I would like to address some of the aspects that the Council of Ministers have raised in their comments paper in their



rejections for the amendment. I am really sad that they have taken this view. They have argued that there is no evidence presented that a rebate of 5 per cent - that is the G.S.T. that would be refunded - is sufficient to alter behaviour and encourage environmentally positive behaviour. We have had plenty of discussion this afternoon already, so I will not rehash that argument, that this is indeed a positive step in terms of encouraging people to change and switch their energy consumption to greener and cleaner alternatives. We have also seen from this Government the success of the e-bike scheme, which in itself was not targeted and we, in Scrutiny, did draw some criticism of it, it has to be said, because it was simply available to those people who could still afford to purchase an electric bicycle at a price that would likely be in excess of £1,000 with the £100 subsidy that the Government were offering. It is somewhat of a shame that that accusation of an untargeted proposal could be brought by the very Government who themselves have championed their own untargeted proposals. I rest that any positive behavioural change is good behavioural change and these measures cover a variety of different aspects that have a range of cost. While not everybody will be in the position to replace their windows with double glazing, planning permission of course allowing, many people might be able to invest in some additional insulation, which will in itself have a great impact on the thermal efficiency of a home. There is criticism also of the timeline for delivery. This is a short-term project. As Deputy Ward in the previous debate highlighted, the clock is now running down on this Government, we are running out of time. This is a relatively simple measure that will help to deliver a long-term objective for the Climate Emergency Fund, which is to encourage the switch of energy consumption in the Island. It is thought that two-thirds of our heating supplies are derived from oil and gas so any attempts that we can make to switch to electric or solar to replace those heating sources should be gratefully adopted by this Assembly. I am grateful to the Constable of St. Ouen for his comments in the previous debate in relation to the importance of switching to renewal power sources. I am sure people have many thoughts in relation to this amendment, I hope that they do. I commend the amendment to the Assembly and look forward to a debate.

### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

Is the amendment seconded? **[Seconded]** Does any Member wish to speak on the amendment?

### **2.3.2 Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

I just want to start by congratulating Senator Moore for bringing this amendment, it has my wholehearted support and the support of my party colleagues as well. She pointed out in her speech the similarities between this and what Deputy Ward had previously brought forward where no action has been taken. It is a bit of a running theme, is it not, how we can sign up to these nice high level principles about carbon neutrality and treating the climate emergency seriously but when it comes to pointing out what tangible action has been taken since that commitment, it is incredibly difficult to point to even one thing that demonstrates an actual commitment to that. I am somebody who takes inspiration from the political philosophy of the suffragette movement who said: "Deeds not words." I think that is what we need to start demanding more of from this Government, deeds not words. It is all well and good to talk about we will have this strategy or that strategy when ultimately they are not much more than words on a sheet of paper unless they direct specific action with tangible outcomes to measure them by. I will wholeheartedly support this amendment. I do not think the Government has made a particularly convincing case in their comments paper against this. If we are going to want to encourage people's behaviour towards more environmentally friendly practices that is going to have to mean coughing up some cash every now and then or trying to incentivise particular behaviour by making things cheaper. If we want people to focus more on renewable energy or energy efficiency in their homes it is not going to help much by keeping it expensive or not taking at least some action to push things in that direction. This has my support. I would hope in an ideal world it would not be that controversial but the Government are opposing it, as they seem to do with anything that is brought forward that seeks to play a part in taking us towards carbon neutrality. Hopefully this can be the exception to that and voted through.

### **2.3.3 The Deputy of St. Martin:**

When one spots the letters G.S.T. in a proposition such as this the immediate reaction is: “Oh, I do not like the idea of taking G.S.T. off things and selecting one from another, it is a slippery road that we go down.” But, of course, when you read closer into it we are not proposing to remove G.S.T. The purchaser will still pay it but the money will be given back and refunded, and it will be refunded for things which will make a difference to carbon emissions. I cannot say that I am particularly happy about the principle of repaying G.S.T. on certain selected items. It is sort of a halfway house towards removing it from or proposing to remove it from ... and I am a great believer in keep G.S.T. as simple as possible giving people back money where they need it but that everybody pays it in the first instance.

[15:15]

Maybe this could be improved further but I am certainly going to support it because, like the propositions that we have had recently, this is a move in the right direction. This could have been done by this Government previously. We could have had help for the items listed on Senator Moore’s amendment. Some of them will make a big difference. The cost of building recently has gone through the roof. Building inflation is way high and this will be a small help but it is the principle that is important and we need to get on and start supporting things that help to reduce carbon emissions. This will help and I will support it.

### **2.3.4 The Connétable of St. Mary:**

The 7 items mentioned in this amendment are vital if we are to achieve zero emissions. However, this is more than a 5 per cent G.S.T. rebate as many people will not be able to access these items due to living in a house which is listed, thereby will not be able to benefit from this. It would be far better to engage with Planning to make the changes required in the planning regulations to allow this, then this would encourage more people to take part and perhaps the States could create a greater monetary incentive. Until that actually happens I will not support this.

### **2.3.5 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

I will be very quick. Just to say it is really safe to vote for this, even if you do not agree with it. It is absolutely fine to vote for it. We agreed something like this last year and it was never enacted, nothing happened. I got an email a few days ago from someone in Treasury or something like that to say: “We realise we have not enacted anything and it is coming up again.” Good on you, Senator Moore, I fully support you in this. It is a very good idea. It is a simple little measure and good luck with getting it enacted this time. You are a better woman than I and I believe that you will get it enacted. Let us be hopeful anyway. Please vote for it, it is a really good idea.

### **2.3.6 Deputy S.A. Pinel:**

Measures to incentivise Islanders to make the right environmental choices need careful thought and should not be rushed. Something the Scrutiny Panel recognises in its report on the Government Plan. I do not necessarily agree with the Scrutiny Panel’s view of such matters all of the time. There is often a good case to legislate quickly and we cannot always tie ourselves up with prolonged consideration and reconsiderations. In this case, following Deputy Ward’s amendment to last year’s plan, which the Council of Ministers accepted, the Treasury is still working on establishing the volumes and values of the named environmentally friendly products coming into Jersey. The work is now reasonably well-advanced having stalled during lockdown, and I expect to receive a report in the first quarter of 2021. Just so that Members understand the scale of the challenge, tax officers have had plenty to identify all known importers and wholesalers of the products listed by Deputy Ward and approach them individually to provide information. So far, about half of identified businesses have provided that information. Once the data is fully assembled, estimates will be constructed on a range of considerations including, for example, which new build related products

such as double glazing, electric boilers, insulation and heat pumps are already being supplied free of G.S.T. in new homes. I do not think the Senator is advocating G.S.T. relief or refunds *per se*. It seems rather she supports rebates equivalent to the value of G.S.T. but made from the Climate Emergency Fund. The arguments against that approach are broadly the same as the arguments against G.S.T. relief. Until we have that data requested by Deputy Ward last year, we cannot know what the cost of the G.S.T. linked rebates would be. Even when we do have that data, I remain fundamentally dubious that rebates equivalent to G.S.T. or delivered through G.S.T. zero rating are the right approach to influencing consumer choices in this environmental field. Where G.S.T. represents just under 5.8 per cent of the retail selling price of these goods, putting it bluntly, a 4.8 per cent rebate is a needless freebie for higher income households who will probably make the right choices anyway, always even if it costs a little bit more to do so, and is unlikely to help lower income households make investments in these goods. This is one example where G.S.T.-linked action would not necessarily be fair for lower income households. They need a much bigger incentive to buy these goods and I do, in principle, favour a scheme that provides such an incentive. It is a giveaway to higher income people and that cannot be right at this time. At worst, the rebate scheme will simply refund money to wealthier consumers who are going to make these purchases anyway. Given we do not yet have the data we undertook to gather, and which I expect to see early in 2021, it is impossible at this time to assess the financial impact of this amendment and leaves the Climate Emergency Fund potentially vulnerable to significant depletion should the rebate be offered on numerous high-cost items. With respect to the potentially regressive nature of the proposed scheme, as G.S.T. is a flat rate, it would offer the greatest benefit in absolute terms on the most expensive items. Since the price is not necessarily linked to the environmental benefits, this scheme would be poorly targeted as compared with perhaps alternative better-targeted approaches that focus on where behaviour can best be changed. I must also caution Members who remain minded to vote for this proposition that I do not believe a repayment or grant scheme can be created for 1st January 2021. This is not a tax measure. It cannot be enacted in the Draft Finance Law, nor should it be. The Senator must surely recognise the amount of work and resources needed to establish the scheme and give it effect. Many questions need to be addressed. How will consumers prove payments of G.S.T.? What evidence will they need to present? Will suppliers be allowed to make claims and pass on the savings to their customers? What about suppliers who are not registered for G.S.T.? They and their customers presumably remain in the same position that they are now. No grant for them. Does the grant relate solely to the G.S.T. related to the supply of goods or to the service of fitting goods? Will the sum be refunded only once the corresponding G.S.T. registered business has accounted for G.S.T. on its quarterly returns? Will there be penalties for fraudulent claims, in which case, we will certainly need law drafting. If the Assembly were to support this move from a week next Friday, then we must all recognise that it will take some months to devise, publicise and launch a scheme. Islanders will not get refunds equivalent to any G.S.T. paid until well into 2021, creating an immediate backlog for whichever government department we decide ought to implement this. I urge Members to reject the amendment.

### **2.3.7 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

I do not quite know where to start. What goes around comes around. I just started rooting in my extensive filing system and I have found in a green file something called a “Green Initiative Fund Establishment” lodged to the Greffe on 31st January 2013 by Deputy Southern of St. Helier. It reads as follows: “To request the Minister for Treasury and Resources to bring forward for approval no later than September 2013 proposals for the establishment of a new special fund in accordance with the provisions of Article 33A of Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2005 to be known as the Green Initiative Fund with the fund to be utilised in consultation with the Ministers for Planning and Environment and Transport and Technical Services to support a programme of economic environmentally sustainable projects, some of which would be in place by the first quarter of 2014 with these projects to include, but not limited to (a) home energy saving, solar heating, power from

the sun, photovoltaics, ground air source heating, wind power, waste water recycling, biomass and biofuel, wave and tidal power, combined heat and power and sustainable transport and (b) to request the Minister for Treasury and Resources to identify the most appropriate manner to provide an initial sum of up to £30 million for the new fund.” I wrote that some 7 years ago now. It never got done. We had a very small fund at the time for making housing energy efficient. It soon ran out of money and it appears we have stopped a lot of that type of initiative. What better way to kickstart our economy after this pandemic and stimulate the development of green energy as the way forward. I have asked for a £30 million fund there. This merely asks for G.S.T. off those sort of initiatives and it seems to me that I cannot help but be totally - and I mean totally - committed to something which gets the economy going in a green, improved and sustainable way so I am backing this to the hilt.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Thank you, Deputy. The Connétable of St. John, did you ask for clarification of what Deputy Southern was saying? I think you came in rather late.

**The Connétable of St. John:**

Yes, I did of the Minister for Treasury and Resources. She said in her speech, as I understood it, that this could not be included in the Government Plan but would need to come back with separate legislation. Is that the case?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Are you prepared to give that clarification, Deputy Pinel?

**Deputy S.J. Pinel:**

Absolutely, Sir. I said that it is not a tax measure and it cannot be enacted in the Draft Finance Law.

**The Connétable of St. John:**

Sorry, Sir, can I follow on that?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

I do not think so. You have had your point of clarification.

**The Connétable of St. John:**

Well, may I raise a point of order, Sir, because if it is something that cannot be debated in the Government Plan and therefore it is not a tax measure, why are we debating this amendment now?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Well, it is a properly brought proposition and Members are entitled to debate it now. I will reflect on what you said but I do not quite see the point that you are making.

**The Connétable of St. John:**

I would be very grateful, Sir, because if it is not something that is in the Government Plan and it is not a tax measure, how can we be debating it within this? That really confuses me, Sir.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Well, it relates to G.S.T. and spending and it has been approved for lodging and for debate, but I will reflect upon what you have said.

**2.3.8 Deputy J.H. Young:**

I am going to praise the proposer of this proposition for reminding us of the desperate need to take action for doing something about reducing our carbon footprint but I have to say this is a device that looks superficially extremely attractive because it offers an opportunity to do something which we

all want. When you look at the small print - and I almost fell into this trap myself - it says: "To half G.S.T." In other words, let us get a bit of G.S.T. back, and one is drawn into thinking that this is about tax policy perhaps, as the previous questioner had spoken of in her words as we have discussed many times before.

[15:30]

I have brought propositions to the States when I was a previous Deputy and lost them about having G.S.T. exempted at that time. That was a debate I brought on these sorts of matters but, no, what we have tucked away in the small print here is a Trojan horse where it says: "Oh, by the way, this will not come out of tax. This will come out of the Climate Emergency Fund." Exactly as we have said before. I almost missed that until I just saw an email prompting me about that. Just think about electric cars. You can buy electric cars up to anything like £100,000 so you will be giving a subsidy of £5,000 to somebody who can well-afford to buy that sort of car. I was not very keen on the electric bike scheme either myself because I did not think it was well targeted, and so items 4 and 5 are really, I think, not targeting the right people and putting money in wealthy people's pockets. The other items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 are all really important adaptations to heating systems and buildings where we desperately need to do things. My proposition is - and I have made it plain to the Council of Ministers and I will bring a proposition even if I cannot get the support of my colleagues - I want to see a restoration of the energy efficiency scheme that ran for, I think, 5 or 6 years started by former Senator Freddie Cohen and continued by my successors, under which over 2,000 lower income households were helped to do these sort of things with direct grants and we spent about £6 million or £7 million I think. Those are the figures. There are Scrutiny reports on the subject. We trained, at public expense, expert energy assessors who can inspect people's homes but previous Governments shut that scheme down and appropriated its income source, which fed it from the vehicle omissions duty, for general taxation. Therefore, we have not been able to make the progress in that scheme. I want those schemes restored and I particularly suggested it because again the Senator introduced it in a proposal and mentioned a new economic report, and I looked at it briefly this morning. I looked for the word "environment" in it. I could not see it. It talks about sustainability but we know sustainability is used by economists to mean all sorts of different things, so there we are. Yes, it is an interesting report at first glance but certainly to bring that as kind of the cavalry to back up this particular proposal, no. So, having spotted that trapdoor in this, I really do not know how much money we would haemorrhage out of the Climate Emergency Fund, and all the points I have made previously would all apply. So let us say, I will certainly be voting against that. This is so tempting and I want to see these things but not paid for out of this fund which we critically need to make sure that we target our support on the right people, the right benefits and we get real environmental leverage.

### **2.3.9 Senator S.C. Ferguson:**

Yes, and I will be the spectre at the feast. Every time I hear people talk about carbon emissions, we are talking about something that is 0.04 per cent of the whole volume of the atmosphere; 0.04 is about one grain of rice in about a 10-pound rice bag so it really is quite ridiculous. However, to my knowledge, some of the suggestions for getting all sorts of subsidies and cuts on G.S.T. or rebates on G.S.T. or anything like that means a higher charge to non-green utility users to cover the costs. In the U.K., the subsidy that is paid to the people with solar panels means a higher price of electricity to people who live in blocks of council flats and so on. In most of these places, you will find that, like in the suggestions here, the costs are covered by the people who cannot afford to buy solar panels and so on. So I agree very much with Deputy Young's support for low-income people having things like efficient heating for housing and so on. I am not sure that the heat pumps and so on are as useful as they might be. I feel that we have to be very careful to make sure that we do not put those sorts of charges on people, as other speakers have said, for an advantage for people buying an electric car for £30,000. Eventually, if we do what the U.K. have done and say: "We are not going to allow any

more petrol and diesel cars in 10 years' time", then who is going to be able to buy a car? I cannot see that many of our lower income people who need a van for work and things like that are going to be able to pay for a £30,000 Tesla or something. The prospect of both climate change and carbon reduction are totally fanciful and based on the United Nations' decision to change the economic climate of the entire world and convert it to a socialist basis. A green climate in the way that, for instance the U.K. are suggesting, would effectively reduce us to a Victorian status. It is proposed by well-meaning people but with no understanding of the scientific basis of the science of the climate. I will support environmental support absolutely first class, yes, but I am not willing to support something which is scientifically totally unsound.

### **2.3.10 Deputy M. Tadier:**

How do you follow that? I will and I think some of those points need to be addressed. One could choose to ignore the last speech but, essentially, we still have a speech being made by someone who is effectively - and I do not mean any offence by this - a climate change denier. I think climate change is happening and we cannot say: "I am happy to try and protect the environment but I do not want to reduce carbon" because we have been told that the 2 go hand in hand. If we do not reduce our carbon emissions drastically as soon as possible, then it is probably too late to avoid many different types of disasters, and we are being told that by scientists across the board. Of course, you can always find someone with an extreme outlying position on the internet if you Google someone with a scientific background to back up your point of view. So I will not dedicate too much to that because I think, by and large, we, as an Assembly, agree and we have agreed that there is a climate emergency. What I do not understand is that when somebody comes up with an idea to come up with an initiative, which even the Minister for the Environment is saying is good, then the same Minister and the same Ministers find a reason not to support it by saying: "Well, we could not possibly use the Climate Emergency Fund." Why not? The clue is in the name, right? It is called a Climate Emergency Fund and this is a proposal that is being put forward by, in this instance, Senator Moore to deal with emissions, which is one of the critical things that we are facing and we have to get to grips with. That is what a Climate Emergency Fund is for. It is also a policy that we have agreed already and has not been delivered on, so I think we are trying to find lots of reasons not to do something which should be obvious to do. At the end of the day, we can still top up the Climate Emergency Fund. It is not a one-off pot of money which is going to be drained. It is entirely for the Minister for Treasury and Resources at some point, when she thinks it is a good idea to maybe put the G.S.T. that she has from the money that has been paid in, to top it back up into the Climate Emergency Fund. Of course, if Senator Moore instead of saying: "Let us take it out of the C.E.F. (Climate Emergency Fund)" had said: "Take it out of direct taxation or out of G.S.T.", then of course there will be a similar argument from the Minister for Treasury and Resources saying: "We could not possibly do that because that is going to reduce my tax intake." Surely, it comes down to the point that, while the general rule is that we do not have many exemptions for G.S.T., there are exemptions that are put in place, for example, for charities, postage and for other things like that. We have exemptions for certain reasons and part of it can be used for behavioural change and it is about a Government saying: "We might not be in a position to give you grants to do this because that is what really progressive Governments might do but we are at least going to make sure that we profiteer by taking G.S.T. off products that you are buying when you are trying to do the right thing." Contrary to what the Minister for Treasury and Resources says, for some people, that really might make the difference. If they are being told that they can claim back their 5 per cent from an appropriate fund, it might make all the difference to their behavioural change. This is not going to be a be all and end all because, quite frankly, when I look down the list of what you can claim the money back for, these are all things that Government should be leading on anyway. It should be obligatory for all States buildings to have solar panels on the roof now. We should be doing that now and it should be in the pipeline that all new buildings that are being built in the future should have all of this stuff included by virtue of the bylaws and the requirements in planning permission. We should be doing that but

this is about, again, transition. When we talk about Jersey in transition, there is a group called Jersey in Transition and the in-transition movement is well-known but we have to transition from our carbon centric way of living to a carbon neutral way of living. It is necessary to have carrots and sticks and if every time somebody proposes a carrot, it is rejected by this Government, then what are we to do? I think we are not to take this Government at its word and, as Senator Mézec says, it becomes a case of words and not deeds when it needs to be very much the other way around. I am supporting this. I am supporting it not because it is a silver bullet but because it is another step in the right direction that we should commit to.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Yes, Deputy, before you close, are you prepared to deal with a point of clarification from Senator Ferguson?

**Deputy M. Tadier:**

If she still wants it, Sir.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Senator Ferguson, sorry, you said you wanted to make a point and then said: “Forget the clarification.” Are you not pursuing that anymore? I will take that as a “No”.

**2.3.11 Deputy J.A. Martin:**

I was not sure whether to speak in this debate but I think some of the speeches are in the realms of fantasy about where we choose to spend our money. Some people do not have money and I am not talking about people who are on income support.

[15:45]

I am talking about people who are asset rich, cash poor. They have saved all their lives and they own a really old property. I could take you around some, for the last speakers, in my district. They will live in one room, they are freezing, they do not have the right insulation or anything like that. They would not be able to choose the money to spend on these items because they do not have the money so how are we helping them? To me, and I will keep it simple, this is not targeted. It will help the people who can afford to give back the G.S.T. There is no limit. It could be one of the cheap cars, it could be a very expensive car, bike, insulation or boilers *et cetera, et cetera, et cetera*. Deputy Young, from my memory at the Council, had the, I would say, in principle support of the Council. It is a much better way of getting there. You help the people who really need the help and you do not start mucking around with refunds on G.S.T. I will leave it there. It is simple for me. Reject.

**2.3.12 Deputy S.M. Wickenden of St. Helier:**

I cannot see this amendment in any other way than tax breaks for the wealthy. I cannot see it as environmental really. This is all about tax breaks for the rich. Ground and air source heat pumps are generally used for heating swimming pools so not many of the not so wealthy will be looking for those ones. Things like photovoltaics and solar panels, I am absolutely with Deputy Tadier. This is the kind of stuff we should be doing in other areas in the bylaws and the like. With electric bikes and cargo boats, I get confused about this idea that the electric bike is a green method of travel. There is a greener method of travel than the electric bike. It is called the pedal bike and you do not have to plug it in but there are no tax breaks for the normal greener solution of travel, which is pedalling. Double glazing is a tough one as well because, at the moment, it depends on what building you have. If you have a listed building, you cannot have double glazing, which I think is absolutely crazy. There are some fantastic like-for-like double glazing windows that can be put in listed buildings now that is far more environmentally friendly than single glazed and much better looking than trying to stick a second window inside the window you have in your house so you have to open 2 windows in the summer. So double glazing for some is nothing but a tax break for the people who can afford it

who are the wealthy. This does not really kind of solve a problem. As this happens, and we will say that you will get your G.S.T. back, you will slowly see the price go up. It will happen because people might go out and start buying and go: “Quick, I can get some money back and I can get £50,000 back on my Tesla” because this does not stop how much you can spend. No, there are other ways to get this stuff going with incentives and some of our rules about buildings and the like to try to help everyone to get into a better way but this is a tax break for the wealthy and it should be thrown out.

### **2.3.13 The Deputy of St. Mary:**

First, I commend Senator Moore for bringing this proposition if only to bring back to the public’s mind that, yes, we do need to incentivise the use of carbon friendly products. The reason I chose to speak was really to counter the argument put forward by a number of people that this is only for the wealthy. There are, out there, a number of private landlords who are taking the opportunity where they can of refurbishing properties for rental. They are aware that there is no incentive possibly to insulate a property. That will not be immediately apparent to a tenant and it will only be when the electricity bills come in, which is the responsibility of the tenant, that such a tenant realises that it is not as well built as it might be. So I simply wish to ask Members to take into account this is not just for the wealthy. It has an effect on house building generally, and that can be for those who are not quite so well-off. That said, I take note of the various comments made by Deputy Young in particular, and it may well be that I shall not be supporting it but only on the basis that further incentivisation measures will be brought into account shortly.

### **2.3.14 Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

I think we need to start by recognising that the intention of the Senator is very laudable but the issue has been eloquently identified by, for example, the Minister for Treasury and Resources and the Minister for the Environment, which is the mechanism itself does not quite work. I do not wish to dwell too much on the fact that one of the ways of keeping G.S.T. simple is trying to avoid any exemptions, which is effectively what this does. The issue is that this is not capped, which comes back to the point about whether it is targeted *et cetera, et cetera*. The other point obviously is that the proposal is to take it from the fund, as correctly identified by the Minister for the Environment, and most particularly it is with effect from 1st January which does mean on that basis, it would take us 3 or 4 months to get a scheme in place. There would be quite considerable uncertainty for people from 1st January as to what exactly was involved. That is really the point I think that I really wish the Senator had come and spoken to Treasury or someone on the Council of Ministers before bringing this proposition and, as I have said to any Member, please come and speak to us early. We did that on the C.S.P. (Common Strategic Policy) and we did it on the Government Plan last year, and I make the same plea again for the future because where we can, we will, particularly if we think an idea is a good idea, try and make sure it does work. That means we can come to the same achievement and that is why we have accepted obviously a number of amendments or made amendments to amendments in the Government Plan already. So, for example, the difficulty of what has been identified, which is if we are dealing with double glazing, is it just the materials or is it the labour, for example, that is included? I know that sounds really boring and technical but that is the type of thing that whoever puts that scheme together would have to consider. So the practicalities from doing it this way are really not good, and certainly I think the Minister for the Environment particularly referred to it. What is far more attractive is some form of grant scheme which can be targeted in the right way. It could tap into, for example, the scheme that former Senator Cohen introduced, which was very much around incentivisation and insulation but very particularly Deputy Ward did request work to be carried out. We accepted that amendment and, as has already been stated, although it did get delayed during the lockdown, we fully expect that data to be coming in in the first quarter of next year. Frankly, I cannot envisage, particularly from the comments made from the Minister for the Environment, that we will not be putting some form of scheme in place shortly thereafter but based on the data we have. I know, again it is boring and not quite exactly what is intended but, essentially,



do not forget this again is the remaining balance of the fund so it does clean it out, is an untargeted approach to a whole variety of very good items but again is a bit of a scattergun approach. So, yes, we absolutely agree with the intention of the Senator, we have heard from the Minister for the Environment and we are fully in agreement with the Minister on that position, but we just do not agree with the mechanism that is being proposed. That is all it is and that is why we really urge Members not to support this. We fully expect, and I fully expect, that if we did not have something in place during the course of next year, other Members would be bringing appropriate propositions. We did say we accepted Deputy Ward's amendment. That will give the data. We expect to receive that during the course of quarter one next year. That means fairly shortly thereafter and certainly during the course of next year, and I would hope before the summer recess, we will be seeing a scheme that can then come to the Assembly for approval and can achieve the mechanisms that we are looking for. That is the intention and really for all those reasons, the principle is sound but the mechanism, in our view, is not sound, and that is why I will not be supporting it. I really would urge other Members not to support it on the bases that have been outlined by a number of Ministers.

### **2.3.15 Deputy K.F. Morel:**

I just quickly wanted to put right a couple of incorrect statements that I believe were made earlier principally around the idea that these are just for the rich. If electric bikes are just for the rich, why did the Minister for Infrastructure twice make them a matter of public policy and incentivise their buying by providing subsidies for them? If it is such a bad idea, I would question why that has happened twice. The second thing is with regard to air source heat pumps. Absolutely they are not for the rich. They are indeed a publicly part-owned utility well-known in the Island that has been selling them at as low a cost as it possibly can in order to encourage as many Islanders as possible to buy them and use them in their homes. They are a far more efficient way of heating your home, which can cut the cost of heating your home by about two-thirds, I believe, and certainly not for the rich. Deputy Johnson was completely correct in what he said about landlords who are taking the opportunity to make their homes for their tenants energy efficient and the reality is that if we are to encourage a lower energy use in the Island, then making homes energy efficient has absolutely got to be at the heart of our policies. So, again, to suggest that that is only for the rich is absolutely incorrect. Indeed, previous Governments did have energy efficiency policies in place whereby the Government had people going around to help Islanders make their homes more energy efficient but it does cost them money and therefore incentives and things like tax breaks or G.S.T. refunds are ways to achieve that. So I do not like it when people come in and make statements which are not correct in that sense. If you wanted to say it fairer, perhaps it is likely that middle Jersey would benefit from this more than lower income families. That I can appreciate because a 5 per cent G.S.T. rebate is not enormous but it is certainly not for the rich and that, in my view, is completely incorrect. Where these measures are targeted would help many Islanders and it is a mass of Islanders that we need to get on board with our energy efficiency policies. We need that to happen if we are to make inroads into Jersey's energy use and so, in that sense, the target of these G.S.T. rebates is perfectly sound. Whether you wish to use this mechanism or not is a different matter but there is no question the target is absolutely correct as a way of reducing energy use in Jersey. Thank you.

### **2.3.16 Connétable R. Vibert of St. Peter:**

I will be quick. Firstly, much has been said about the mechanism for refunding G.S.T. on these items being incorrect. Of course, it is like anything. If there was a real will to do this, then we would find a way of doing it and I would urge Members not to use that as an excuse to vote against the proposition. The other matter is similar to the last speaker that ground and air source heat pumps are only for the rich. St. Peter installed air heat source pumps in 15 units that we built almost 10 years' ago and of course, at that time, probably it was not financially viable but today it certainly is. I speak about the same part-owned utility that Deputy Morel spoke about, and I am in regular contact with them. The price of these units has dropped dramatically during the period since we installed ours

and, in fact, they are completely viable now for fitting in domestic houses. They have an extremely large display of them if you go into a certain showroom. I think it is important to correct that. This certainly is not something just for the rich. Thank you very much.

[16:00]

### **2.3.17 The Deputy of St. Peter:**

I thought I may have missed the boat there. There is so much goodness about this and I love the carrot approach. I fear that the carrot is not going totally in the right direction insofar as there are many things here where, as I think Deputy Morel described it, middle Jersey would very much benefit from this, and that has to be supported. However, there are certain areas where I believe the money will be saved for the wrong people and we will be putting money in the pockets of the rich. Now I know there are air source heaters which are extremely beneficial, and my Constable and I know exactly what he is talking about as we are getting great benefits from them within the Parish. However, there are thousands of swimming pools over here which use air source heating and I struggle with my conscience to say a 5 per cent discount or a rebate should be given to such areas. Now we have double glazing, and I think Deputy Wickenden mentioned double glazing. I think I am right - and I will stand corrected by people who know better - that there is something like 3,500 listed properties over here, many of which are not allowed double glazing. I hope, as it has been mentioned, that the Island Plan will remedy that in the next iteration. However, I am not sure that many people will be persuaded by 5 per cent to put double glazing in because I know many are keen to do it as soon as they possibly can and as soon as approvals will be given. Again, it has been mentioned that the cheapest Tesla is £40,000 and I do not believe you can get a new electric car for less than about £25,000. I do not believe that 5 per cent will change the purchasing behaviour of people in that area. So I am inclined not to go with this only because there are too many people who do not need it that will benefit as opposed to those that do need it who will not benefit. I think something more targeted will be required and, as has been mentioned, hopefully this will come through during the course of the year because it clearly is the right approach. I firmly believe in the carrot but I think too many carrots again to the wrong people for my liking.

### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

Thank you, Deputy. If no other Member wishes to speak, I call upon Senator Moore to reply.

### **2.3.18 Senator K.L. Moore:**

I thank all of those who have contributed to the debate as well as those who have listened. It has been a similar theme and topic to other debates that we have had today so I will try to keep myself brief and to the point. The point about targeting is fully appreciated and I take on board the criticism that this could be described as scattergun. However, I feel quite strongly that to do something is better than doing nothing and this is a potentially temporary solution. I have tried to offer in suggesting this is done through a refunded G.S.T. a different approach, some simple mechanism to address and encourage the behaviours we should be encouraging. I think many Members feel that there is an abject failure of this Government to encourage good environmental practice and a change in behaviour. We need Islanders of all parts of the economic spectrum to change their behaviours and think about how they are using energy sources, and that will bring great benefits to those who are less well-off by being able to cut their energy consumption by two-thirds or cut their costs by two-thirds. That would be a really fantastic thing and if a 5 per cent refund was able to get them across that line then why not look at it? The lack of environmental initiative from this Government, despite Deputy Ward's great efforts of bringing forward first our commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and then I think it was him who came up with the idea of the Climate Emergency Fund. These things are here, they are levers we have in order to try to prompt and address change in the Island, yet we see nothing. The nothing has got to such an extent whereby I have been told this week from some of the people who have contacted me and supported this amendment, such is the

level of interest in environmental measures from members of the public, who are frustrated beyond belief by the lack of grasp of the issues from the Assembly as they see it. At the end of this month the electric vehicle parking scheme comes to an end and it is being replaced by nothing. There will be absolutely nil available to encourage people to take up the use of an electric vehicle, and we are very fortunate to be an island and have great open spaces in our town areas and, as we have debated before around schools, there are issues around air pollution. Encouraging use of vehicles that have low emissions and no emissions, such as an electric vehicle, simply makes sense in the 21st century. I take on board the criticisms but, as is often said in this Assembly, the enemy of a good plan is a perfect plan and I encourage Members to take a bold step today and address just a small scheme that could bring a lot of good and encourage that great change. What better thing if we could turn the two-thirds of households and businesses that are running on oil and gas to a half, simply, or maybe take it down to one-third? That would be a great step on the road to becoming carbon-neutral by 2030. Let us not forget that is now only 9 years away. The clock is ticking and we, as an Assembly, need to start addressing it with some energy and enthusiasm so that those members of the public who also feel our energy and enthusiasm for this important matter will feel we are genuinely trying to do something. I hope Members will support this amendment and I ask for the *appel*.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Thank you, Senator. In a moment the Greffier will add a vote into the chat channel of this meeting. She has done so and the vote is now open. I ask Members to cast their votes. If all Members have had the opportunity of casting their votes then I ask the Greffier to close the voting. The amendment has been rejected on the link: 19 votes *pour* and 23 votes *contre*. There are 3 votes in the chat, one vote *pour* and 2 votes *contre* making a total of 20 votes *pour* and 25 votes *contre*.

<b><i>POUR: 20</i></b>		<b><i>CONTRE: 25</i></b>		<b><i>ABSTAIN: 0</i></b>
Senator K.L. Moore		Senator I.J. Gorst		
Senator S.W. Pallett		Senator L.J. Farnham		
Senator S.Y. Mézec		Senator S. Ferguson		
Connétable of St. Helier		Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré		
Connétable of St. Lawrence		Senator T.A. Vallois		
Connétable of St. Brelade		Connétable of St. Clement		
Connétable of Grouville		Connétable of St. John		
Connétable of St. Peter		Connétable of Trinity		
Connétable of St. Martin		Connétable of St. Mary		
Deputy G.P. Southern (H)		Connétable of St. Ouen		
Deputy M. Tadier (B)		Deputy J.A. Martin (H)		
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (S)		Deputy K.C. Lewis (S)		
Deputy K.F. Morel (L)		Deputy M.R. Higgins (H)		
Deputy of St. John		Deputy J.M. Maçon (S)		
Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat (H)		Deputy S.J. Pinel (C)		
Deputy S.M. Ahier (H)		Deputy of St. Ouen		
Deputy R.J. Ward (H)		Deputy R. Labey (H)		

Deputy C.S. Alves (H)		Deputy S.M. Wickenden (H)		
Deputy K.G. Pamplin (S)		Deputy of St. Mary		
Deputy I. Gardiner (H)		Deputy G.J. Truscott (B)		
		Deputy J.H. Young (B)		
		Deputy L.B.E. Ash (C)		
		Deputy G.C.U. Guida (L)		
		Deputy of St. Peter		
		Deputy J.H. Perchard (S)		

## **2.4 Government Plan 2021-2024 (P.130/2020): eighteenth amendment (P.130/2020 Amd.(18))**

### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

The next amendment listed in the running order is the eighteenth amendment lodged by Deputy Ward and I ask the Greffier to read the amendment.

### **The Deputy Greffier of the States:**

After the words “Appendix 2 - Summary Table 5(i) to the report” insert the words –“, except that in Summary Table 5(i) the Revenue Head of Expenditure for Covid-19 Response should be reduced by £573,717 and such funding allocated to the Head of Expenditure for Children, Young People, Education and Skills to allow for the extension of the school meals pilot to all fully State-funded primary schools with a view to Island-wide provision being in place by the start of term in September 2021 at the latest, or earlier if practicable.”

### **2.4.1 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

I will be brief. I have changed my jacket. I put my lucky jacket on for this one. This amendment comes from the hope that we can extend the school meals project that has been piloted not just in terms of time but in terms of the extent across the Island. I think that is an important point because I know an objection from the Government, and I am sure they will think of some others, was that they are already putting money aside. That is great if there is money aside to extend the pilot so this money can go directly into extending the project for free school meals in primary schools across all state schools. I want to point out a few things briefly and then we will let the debate ensue and hopefully it will be a relatively short debate and spare everybody. This is targeted. It is targeted because it targets those students who are on pupil premium. If we can, in the long term of course, I think it will be a good thing to extend to all students so when students go to school we can send a clear message to them that when you come here you will receive free food and it will be good healthy food and will be part of your education. At this time the project is directed at pupil premium students. Moreover it is estimated in the reports that accompany, and there are 3 reports that accompany, 2 come from the reports from Caring Cooks and their review of the system so far because they run the project at the moment, and one is a child rights impact assessment again, and the time being taken to produce that because I think they are very important things in these areas, which certainly talk about the real benefits of this project for supporting children and supporting families in particular. It is targeted. One of the criticisms that has been made says that things are not targeted. This one certainly is. It is timely because it is in place now and it can be extended easily and can be extended straight away. I have spoken to head teachers particularly in the St. Helier’s schools who are incredibly positive and I want to say about head teachers in our primaries that if you want people to solve problems go into schools and speak to head teachers and teachers and say: “We want to do this; how

can we get it done?” It is a very different attitude from some Government Ministers. They just say: “Yes, of course we can do that and we will find a way because it is the right thing to do.” We will find a way because it is the right thing to do. I just re-emphasise those words. It is not from the climate change fund, so a number of Ministers will be very relieved about that so that ticks that box as well. The money I am talking about here comes from data on the uptake of school meals in the pilot so far, how much that would cost, and there is an economy of scale that is a very difficult one to pin down. I am sure that will be one area where people can pick a hole in this, the only difficulty being what that economy of scale is. The more meals that are made, the cheaper they become but they stay healthy. That is the important thing: to provide a healthy meal to our children at least once a day in schools, plus the social side of it. They are sitting together. Perhaps they are learning to use a knife and fork appropriately. The social conventions of sitting down and eating together that go throughout societies all over the world and I think that is such an important thing that we have in schools. The money I am suggesting comes from the Economic Recovery Fund because a local company runs this so the money goes to a local company into the local economy that can extend its workings and therefore, we are putting money directly into a company that has really done well in producing this. In the long term, if people are worried about this one particular company having this, I am sure if it extends it will go to tender and the best company will do it. But I hope if it does, we consider it only going to local companies to provide because I think it should be done here.

[16:15]

Just a couple of things and then I will be quiet and let people have their say. There is an estimate of 1,000 children who do not have a hot meal each day because of poor accommodation or lack of cooking facilities or financial difficulties. There is a very interesting fact about school meals about the number of packed lunches put out into children’s bags every day. The worst thing for parents is to have to remember to get packed lunches together. I remember years of doing that and it was always Sunday night when you realised you did not have food for the next morning. The amount of throwaway plastic and low-quality food, not because parents want to do it but because that is the most convenient that is used, so this is an opportunity for us to say to our primaries: “We are going to support you after a really difficult time and we are going to say to you we are going to invest money from a recovery fund to help a local business and in doing so feed our children in school and give them a really good part of their day and a healthy meal.” I believe this is a win-win-win situation and I make the proposition.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Thank you, Deputy. Is the amendment seconded? **[Seconded]**. I think there was a point of additional clarification. Was that sought, Deputy Young, of Deputy Ward?

**Deputy J.H. Young:**

Yes, if I could. Deputy Ward told us the money for this project will come from the Economic Recovery Fund. I wonder if he could give us a little bit more detail on that because the proposition refers on page 185 in the main Government Plan report that takes money from an £87 million budget of COVID-19 and puts it into a budget of children and young people. I wondered if he could give a little bit more detail because obviously it is quite hard to find one’s way around these particular tables. They are complex and, as the previous debates have all shown, the issue of where the money is coming from is quite an important one in the debate so if the Deputy could just clarify it would help me a bit.

**Deputy R. J. Ward:**

Certainly, I thought I had made it clear on page 4 of my report that says: “Funding to allow for the extension of the schools meals pilot to all fully state-funded primary schools is sought from the Economic Recovery Programme. £15.5 million is set aside in 2021 and £12 million in 2022 and

2023. This can provide initial funding for 3 years. The contract is currently held by a local company and any future tender process is likely to be a local company. The expansion of the programme will offer long-term sustainable employment with significant positive social impact. This will help the transition to a post-pandemic new normal.” That is where it has come from. That is all I can say. I put it in the report. That is clear to me as to where it is coming from but obviously if Ministers can find money elsewhere, it is £573,000. I make the point again but let us just take it from the communications. But anyway let us move on. There is a suggestion there in that place so I thought I had made it clear. I hope that helps the Deputy.

**Deputy J.H. Young:**

Yes, it does. It helps me immensely and I thank the Deputy for his clarification. Obviously, he has helped me in explaining the part of the proposition that refers to these tables, *et cetera*.

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

I will say I share the Minister’s difficulty in negotiating through these tables. I absolutely understand it.

**2.4.2 Senator T.A. Vallois:**

Firstly, I would like to thank the Deputy for lodging this amendment regarding free school meals. It highlights the important work that the Government is undertaking to improve the health and well-being of the Island’s children. As I referred to in a previous debate, I give my thanks to the Deputy for his hard work in terms of completing a child rights impact assessment. This is an example of how Members can inform a debate while looking at an issue through children’s eyes. As we have heard from many today, I have to make the point, and I know it is becoming a tiring argument but it is a real argument, that the impact that COVID-19 has had on our public sector staff has significantly interrupted workstreams, and this is highlighted in the disruption the pandemic has had on the pilot on free school meals. It is vitally important the pilot is completed first so enough data and project information are obtained to support informed future decision-making. A 2020 commitment is already in place in the Government Plan to financially support an expansion to the pilot. The Council of Ministers supports an extension given the disruption caused by Covid-19. This extension would be through until the end of the autumn term 2021 and the budget for 2021 is sufficient to support this. In 2021 we will continue delivery of the pilot at Janvrin and Samarès schools. It will include an expansion of the pilot to include St. Luke’s primary school in January 2021 with further consideration to be given to inclusion of a fourth school before the year end, 2021. Regardless of any amendment to the Government Plan or additional funding neither the department nor any local service provider would be able to deliver an Island-wide, fully equipped and operational service in the suggested timescales by the start of September term 2021. This is for several reasons that I will address. Fundamentally, primary schools do not have the catering/kitchen facilities to fully implement this service. The pilot will allow full consideration to be given to schools’ requirements and facilities. This is no mean feat. This will involve the fit-out of 21 primary schools with fully operational catering kitchens. This will include site condition surveys, plans, furniture fitting and other associated costs. Consideration will also have to be taken into staffing levels and resources required followed by recruitment and full training. All this takes time and, as I stated, the pilot will enable us to fully understand the requirements. Also, more importantly, the department needs to work with commercial services to agree a fair and transparent process relating to the procurement of future services. The pilot will enable the Customer and Local Services and the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department to have a discussion as to how income support is paid and how this might impact on the implementation of this subsidised free school meals service. Consideration may also be taken to the option of means testing. Again, this will be reviewed once the data from the pilot has been reviewed. Funding is already established in the Government Plan for preventable diseases under the Health and Community Services Department that includes a commitment to scale up a

primary school meals service and support an extension across primary schools, if viability is established through the pilot scheme. Within the total funding for years 2021 to 2024 preventable diseases cover initiatives to improve well-being and support Islanders to live healthier, more active and longer lives. Plans include allocation to support primary school meals, breakfast clubs, healthy start programmes and food deeds. The breakdown of the funding from the Government Plan allocation to the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department in 2021 is £156,800; in 2022 is £583,700 and in 2023 is £601,200. In summary, the funding is available to work towards the goals we would like to see achieved from the absolute commitment and recognition of the importance of this initiative and recognising the aims of the food nutrition strategy of the Government of Jersey. However, I urge Members to reject this particular amendment and allow the pilot to be completed to ensure we deliver the best service we can for the children and young people of this Island.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Can I ask a question of the previous speaker, please?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

A point of clarification, yes.

**Deputy G.P. Southern:**

It is, yes. The point of clarification is how long does the pilot have to run before it naturally finishes?

**Senator T.A. Vallois:**

The pilot was supposed to finish at the end of the academic year next year but we have agreed to extend that until the end of 2021 because of the impact that COVID-19 has had. We want to be able to analyse and look at the data to provide the appropriate resource and information and implementation of the school meals in the right way.

**2.4.3 Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

We need to wait for the pilot to complete so we can analyse the data is, in my view, in politics an absolute nightmare of a sentence. It is the exact thing I do not want to hear, especially in the context of talking about providing nutritional meals to children in school. For me this issue is really simple. I do not think we need to wait for a pilot to be complete to get the information we need that is going to be that this ought to be extended across the Island. That can only be the conclusion of this pilot. It is not going to run and conclude that this was a bad idea and let us scrap the whole thing. The only conclusion it is going to reach is that it ought to be extended. Right now, there is an inherent inequality in it being provided in some schools and not others. It being extended, the Minister said, by 2 schools next year is also surely an admission that it is the right thing to do and that is the direction of travel and this amendment gives C.Y.P.E.S. the resourcing to get on with it. How can that possibly be unwelcome for C.Y.P.E.S.? I can understand all sorts of concerns there may be about what is the exact appropriate level of resourcing to the penny and what exactly will be the framework needed, the infrastructure on the ground to get these meals prepared and delivered to those schools, none of which is insurmountable by accepting this amendment. This amendment gives the department an opportunity to go ahead and expand it with some resourcing and if it turns out they have been given too much resourcing with the numbers in this amendment that is fine. You just give the underspend back or you can come back to the Assembly at some point and say: "We are still in the process of this. It perhaps needs a little bit more" and I would really struggle to believe that the Assembly would not grant that. What Deputy Ward is trying to do is absolutely in line with our aspirations to put children first, to provide firstly, a little bit of a break to parents so they do not have to worry about compiling their lunches for their children in among all the other stresses they will face with preparing children to go to school and all the other financial concerns that increasingly more and more families have to contend with. It is about saying to these children that they matter. They are important to us as a society. We want them to be able to go to school, have a nourishing meal and all the social

aspects about sitting down together and providing that for them as a community as a whole as part of their education, like it is in many other countries where it is just a given that when you go to school you get a meal as part of that as well as part of your educational offer.

[16:30]

That must surely be our direction of travel but there has recently been a very prominent campaign in the U.K. with a successful footballer who has been campaigning for greater access to free school meals in the U.K. because of understanding the effects of poverty on the education of children and their opportunities in life as a result of that, and that has helped bring that to public consciousness in Jersey as well. We already have a provider that is delivering school meals in some of our schools now who, as far as I can tell, is doing an extremely good job and would absolutely love to be able to expand it and provide more so, frankly, I think we should be biting their hand off and saying great, this is clearly in the interests of these children. It is in line with so many of our strategic priorities, not just putting children first but also improving Islanders' health. It is also helpful for those families who have financial difficulties as well and to take that direct burden away from them in that sense. I am just surprised that we would not hear from the Ministers with responsibility for children and education to step forward and say that this is a good thing for the children who we are looking after in their time they are at school. It supports our strategic needs. In the grand scheme of things, it costs very little and I hope Members of the Assembly will support this amendment and I think the sooner we take that step that we are probably inevitably going to take anyway. I hope they support this amendment. I see there is a point of clarification from the Minister for Education.

**Senator T.A. Vallois:**

Senator Mézec refers to our commitment for putting children first and our requirement around this. In terms of the speech that I gave around the issues we have in providing this on the basis of the amendment that has been put forward it is not a case of we do not want to. It is a case of the issue of being able to develop this on an Island-wide basis from September 2021. I am sure the Senator would recognise that from his former role as Minister for Children and Housing and working with me in the department and recognising the issues we are faced with in terms of trying to develop this in the right way, in the proportionate way, and in the way that we expect it to be seen.

**Senator S.Y. Mézec:**

I, of course, accept a large amount of what the Minister has just said. I worked closely with her when I was in Government, and enjoyed that very much and respect very much the job that she is trying to do. But I do have to say, I think the Assembly giving a polite and firm point in a particular direction with some funding attached to it can perhaps give the impetus that is needed to mobilise those who need to be mobilised to get this delivered. Sometimes I worry without that impetus provided in the form of a States Assembly vote, in a context like this, that it may take more time than could otherwise be the case to deliver something that could be so beneficial to Jersey's children.

**2.4.4 Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

To respond to the previous speaker, I would like to say this is a good thing. I think all of us would agree that none of us want any of our students to go to school hungry at all. Of course we all know, and I am sure the teachers among the Assembly will know, that for good educational reasons a child that is fed with good nutritional food is a good learner. There is a very good reason why this policy, which originates in the Health Department - it is the food and nutrition strategy - which then comes to the Education Department for implementation. It is important. I will probably be unpopular with many among the Assembly because often in this debate the role of parents and parenting does tend to be forgotten, and let us not forget that one of the key responsibilities of a parent is to feed your child. However, in those circumstances where perhaps that is not something which can be done, yes, it is absolutely right that the state stands in and provides that. That is what the Minister for Education



has been looking to do with health colleagues. What I should say, of course, is that the food and nutrition strategy also goes with the sports and exercise strategy; they do go together - not that I am to lecture anyone about exercise and sport or obesity - but it is looking at those issues holistically. Why does it matter with the data that the Minister for Education is talking about because this is about implementation? From the limited response that we had from the pilot programme, and this is not a full dataset, there are caveats around it, but from the initial data that we already have back we know that those parents who would and should be eligible for the free schools meal programme, for some reason or other, are not taking it. Therefore, we have to ask ourselves: is this particular model the best method of delivery? Do we need to think about a hybrid model? Do we need to think about this alongside maybe income support measures? That is why the Minister for Education is making this stand around the data and the intelligence to develop this policy because all of us want to support this particular element. I see Deputy Ward has a point of clarification.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Are you prepared to give way, Deputy Maçon?

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

Yes, Sir.

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

Sorry, I did not mean to interrupt, Deputy Maçon, it can wait to the end. I know what it is like when you are in mid-flow. Are you sure you are okay now?

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

I have given way, yes.

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

I just wanted to check whether the Assistant Minister knows that the uptake of around 46 per cent is very similar to all projects in the U.K., *et cetera*, and that is quite a high uptake in terms of this, and you are not going to get much higher than that? It is just the way these things work for all sorts of reasons. Therefore I wonder whether that data needs to be looked at a little bit more positively. I wonder if he knew that.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

I am sorry, if he could just repeat that figure; it did not come across clearly.

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

It is around 46 per cent, somewhere in my report, but I am trying to do 2 things at once.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

46?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Yes, that is right, 46 per cent.

**Deputy J.M. Maçon:**

The proposer has made that point. Obviously the Minister for Education's position is we need to better understand that, what could we do better? Is it more to do with education, other elements to do it? It is not a case of anyone saying that this is not something which is important. It absolutely is important for the educational reasons, as I have already outlined. It is important. It is just how it is done and how it is implemented. Members might want to vote for this out of the goodwill to signal something but we have to be realistic. If the facilities are not there within the schools then it is almost

making a rod for the Minister for Education's back because she may not be able to deliver that programme, which obviously Members would then be disheartened because they will say: "You did not implement what we voted for." But Members have to be aware the facilities may not be there in order to do it. The budgets which the Minister for Education has, in order to extend the pilot and the programme going forward, is there within the Government Plan. This is something which the Minister for Education feels very passionately about. She has obviously been supporting this overtly and behind the scenes as well. I do not think this is a policy which she is likely to abandon at any time. But she wants to follow the proper process. She wants to get the full evidence in a Jersey context. I believe, on balance, it is something we should allow her to do.

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

I have a question. I think it is a question of interpretation of the amendment. It stems from the Minister who was saying that she might not be able to get the products in place in the time requested. But reading the amendment, to me it does not seem like a time is firmly set because it says: "With a view to the project being in place by the start of term in September 2021." I am assuming the money would need to be spent by the end of 2021, is that the case?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

I am not sure I am the right person to ask about that. Perhaps you will have a response from the proposer.

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

Do you want me to respond now? Quite happy to, to speed the debate along a little.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

If we can perhaps regard it as a point of clarification and you can deal with that, Deputy Ward.

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

I think Deputy Doublet is spot on in the wording. It is very difficult. The idea is, yes, the target is September 2021 because of the discussions with the people providing they do suggest if they put their foot on the pedal they can do that, but if it does not happen then obviously there is going to be a realism here. In terms of the spending, yes, I suppose that spending would have to be in 2021 but it is from the Economic Recovery Fund and as with anything from that fund if it is not spent it just goes back to the fund, I believe, for the next year. I hope that answers Deputy Doublet's question.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Are you about to make a speech as well, Deputy Doublet?

**Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

Yes, please.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Before you do, there is a question for the Attorney General from Deputy Perchard so I will call that, and then I will come back to you for your speech.

**Deputy J.H. Perchard:**

I think this is a question for the A.G. I just wanted to understand if this amendment is adopted and the wording is to allow for the extension of the school meals pilot to all fully state-funded primary schools, what is the impact of that on the current contract with the current supplier? Would that inevitably mean that that supplier would forego a tender process because of how this is worded and would that be something that the States is able to do or would there be an obligation to carry out a tender process?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Mr. Attorney or Mr. Solicitor General, I am not sure that is really a matter for you.

**Mr. M. Jowitt, H.M. Solicitor General:**

I would be very delighted if it were not a matter for me. I do not immediately know the answer. It would raise questions of contract, which would be really for the department to consider, together with those who presently supply the services to primary schools. I am doubtful very much that it is a question for the law officers to answer.

**Deputy J.H. Perchard:**

There is no contractual issue as far as he is concerned.

**The Solicitor General:**

Forgive me, if the Deputy is asking me that question I am not giving that advice. I am not familiar with the present arrangements. It seems to me fundamentally a matter for the Minister to consider, not something that the law officers can assist with today.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Senator Vallois, if you could regard that as a point of clarification for you to deal with. Can you respond to that?

**Senator T.A. Vallois:**

Yes, Sir, I am more than happy to respond to that. The point I made in my opening speech is that of course the embarking on this project was a pilot. The purpose and the reason of the pilot was to obtain the data and the information in terms of a Jersey context. The intention was then, following that pilot, with regards to the data and the information that was compiled from that work that was done, was to then go out to working with our commercial services to agree a fair and transparent process relating to the procurement of future services. That was the point in where we started up with regards to the meals position.

[16:45]

The food and nutrition strategy, which is under the Minister for Health and Social Services, our role is to implement the requirements of that, and the funding within the preventable disease area of the Government Plan was considered as how we would move forward with that data. We were purely expanding the pilot because of the impact that COVID had had this year on that pilot project.

**2.4.5 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:**

I hear what the Minister for Education is saying but I also acknowledge what the proposer has said, and indeed Senator Mézec. I agree. I think this is a no-brainer and I do not think there are many among us who will disagree that school meals would be a good thing. The source of where this money is being taken from, I think whether or not the contract will be continued by the current provider or not, if there are problems in scaling up the work that is currently being done I am sure that there will be other hospitality businesses perhaps that will be biting the Minister's hands off to help with this project. I think it is really important and Deputy Ward, I know he has worked really hard on this amendment and it is something that he believes in. I understand that it was something that has been raised in the U.K. very recently. It is not something that might not have been in this Government Plan had it not been raised in the U.K., but I think it is good that we are talking about this because what children eat determines much of their future health. In terms of investment and something that we can do for our children, this is something that will pay huge dividends in terms of the health of our population over the coming decades. I also acknowledge what Deputy Maçon was saying about feeding one's children. Of course that is a basic thing that parents do but I have to say

I think I heard a collective sigh from parents around the Island at some of the comments that were being made there because it is not easy to provide a nutritionally-balanced cold packed lunch or even something that can be kept warm. It is a lot easier to give a balanced meal when it is something that is being prepared hot and fresh and given to the child on the premises. I am also aware of the food and nutrition strategy through my role as chair of the B.F.I. (Baby-Friendly Initiative) Steering Group because raising breastfeeding rates in the Island is one of the 3 key indicators in that strategy. One of the other indicators is to raise the level of children and adults consuming the recommended levels of fruit and vegetables in Jersey. Again, the proposer touched on this in his opening speech. It is really difficult to find nutritious things to put in a child's lunchbox and try to present it in a way that they are going to eat it because effectively when you pack your child's lunchbox in the morning you have no idea whether they are actually going to eat it and you are not there to influence and to try and shape their behaviour to try to get them to eat it. But research shows that when children eat the same things together that significantly increases the likelihood that they will eat those healthy options, like vegetables. One study that I saw found that children who observe their peers eating a certain vegetable are more likely to eat those same vegetables themselves at a later point in time. Furthermore, they ate nearly 3 times the amount of the vegetable than those who did not observe their peers eating it. So it is not just about parents being lazy or being too busy to make up lunchboxes. It is the very fact of having a hot meal served among your peers and eating together, eating the same thing, will result in children eating healthier food. The fact that when you look at the food and nutrition strategy, and you look at some of the data that is in there, and the consumption of fruit and vegetables shows one of the steepest downward curves. If we can do this it would most likely help to turn that curve around; I am not sure if it has or has not already been turned around. I would suspect it has not, especially given what we have been facing this year when again research is showing that children and adults are eating less healthily because of the stress that we have been facing and because perhaps of the less time available to certain sectors of the population. Sorry, that is a bit of a tangent. I will absolutely be supporting this. I do hear what the Minister for Education is saying, that it might be difficult to do some extra work to implement this but I do have faith that that work could be done and some of that money could be used for extra staff to administer it, if that is something that is needed. I hope that people will support this. I think it will have a real tangible positive impact, not just on the quality of the food that our children are eating but it will have that extra impact of helping families, in terms of the time and money that families have available to them. I do not think that is something we should dismiss. That is something that is an added benefit of this. So I will be supporting this.

#### **2.4.6 Senator S.W. Pallett:**

I think most Members will want to support this in some shape or form moving forward. But I think a lot of it is going to be around the timing. I think Senator Mézec mentioned that. For me it is important that we provide school meals sooner than later. I just want to go over some experience I had at Plat Douet School a year ago, and I think Deputy Maçon was there as well. I attended a breakfast initiative in association with both the Government of Jersey and Jersey Sport, so it was around nutrition. It was also around exercise. I attended on the last day and watched children coming in for their breakfast that morning, delighted to have come in and got something hot to eat or some had cold food. But they were excited to get something to eat and really excited about doing some exercise as well, teaching the right things, teaching them about a healthy diet, healthy exercise regime. But I did decide to ask the teachers around whether they knew which of the children were most in need, and I think teachers are in the best position to know a little bit about children's backgrounds, a little bit about their homelife, and have a greater understanding of which of those children are most in need. I think the opportunity to get something to eat at school early on was important. Teachers told me that it allowed children to focus much better during the morning. The last thought I had of that morning was one particular child who was never early for school, a little bit like me. But he was never early for school. During this week he was late on the first day, he was on

time the second day, and by the third day he was turning up early because he knew he was going to get something hot to eat. Not only was that a driver but I did ask this teacher, because he was one of those children that had behavioural issues as well at school. They had noticed a difference even in those 5 days around how he was acting at school and his behaviour with other pupils as well. It showed me the importance of making sure children at school get fed well. This project for me has to go ahead as soon as possible. I understand the issues around data because everything that was happening that week, data was being collected, but I think we should be moving this forward as quick as we can. So I am going to support this amendment, and I do not do that lightly and I do not do that to annoy the Minister for Education, because I know she is doing a fantastic job. But it is important that we implement this as soon as possible. I will support the amendment and hope that we can achieve this sooner than later.

#### **2.4.7 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Here we are, second day of a Government Plan debate, and already I have heard some strange and wonderful things in these 2 days. But it seems to me it is getting even more strange and weird because I think what I am hearing is a Minister for Education who totally agrees with the need for our children to be well-fed and healthy in order to study well. That is unanimously agreed across the board between the proposer of the amendment and the Ministers who are involved in this. Here the amendment is that we can find you some more funding, please expand the system as widely as you can, given the circumstances, but with no had deadline on there it seems to me that it is absolutely crazy for the Minister for Education to be turning down money, turning down a resource in order to get on with things. Where are we going next? This seems like, as we say, a complete no-brainer. We are all in agreement. We have got the opportunity for some additional funding and some additional resource, let us get on with it please. We do not need to do an awful lot on this. This is ready-made to go.

#### **2.4.8 Deputy M. Tadier:**

I am speaking in support of the proposition but not simply to support Deputy Ward. I read through his report and also the appendix, which I thought was really great to see the good work that Caring Cooks are doing, not just simply providing food but in providing the education around food as well. I think that is really important. A lot of people have already touched on the nutritional value for some children who are going to school and maybe come from difficult or complex families, whereby they are not necessarily getting a good square meal a day and a hot meal a day. But I think it is worth, just for a moment, focusing on the tangential benefits, if I can call them that, and I am going to use what is going to sound like some religious language but in a secular context. It is the idea of when you sit down together, whether it is as adults or children or mixed, is that you are partaking not just in food but also in fellowship, so you are communing together. There is something very human about that. There is something which is also a great leveller. The fact that this is targeted in the pilot towards pupil premium, but there is also an opportunity of course for them to be sitting down with other students and pupils at their school. It is the one moment where I think nothing else really matters. You are not looking at the differences between each other and who might be ... luckily in Jersey we have school uniforms but you are not looking at maybe what kind of phone your colleague and your co-student has got at school or whether they are better off than you or worse. It is that moment where you get the chance to chat to each other. As I said, it is very human and it is a good thing to do. I do think it is a no-brainer. I do hope that this policy that the Council of Ministers seems to have in just saying: "No, there are certain propositions that will not pass unless we say that they will pass and we accept them." Who really has a strong argument to say that we do not want to see this for all of our primary schools in all of our constituencies in all of the Parishes? It has to be a good thing to do and I do ask Members, including Ministers, to support this fully.

#### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

I think, Senator Vallois, you have a point of clarification. Is this in relation to Deputy Tadier's speech?

**Senator T.A. Vallois:**

No, it was in regards to Deputy Southern's but I will remove the point of clarification.

[17:00]

**2.4.9 Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré:**

This is a slightly odd debate because we are almost in vehement agreement with each other in terms of the benefit of school meals. Where the point seems to have been missed, and I will again just refer to the comments that are on the website and also circulated to Members, is that there is already funding in the plan for all this. That is really the main aim we are not accepting the amendment. Because of the delays of COVID and because of the need to roll this out carefully and by "roll this out" it is already happening as - to quote from the comments - there is a 2020 commitment, i.e. what was in last year's Government Plan, is already in place in the Government Plan and this is to financially support an extension to the pilot scheme during 2021. Essentially the money that we budgeted is sufficient to support that. If one looks on page 2 of those comments it does show the money - this is extra money - in the plan that we are debating of £156,000 in 2021 and then going up to over £583,000 in 2022. It does talk about, in the comments, the continued delivery of the pilot, so it has started at Janvrin and Samarès, an expansion of the pilot to include St. Luke's in January 2021. This is not a case of we are not doing anything. It is a case that we started and the point is made very clearly that because primary schools do not have the catering or kitchen facilities to fully implement the service presently, essentially one has to work out all the logistics and how we deal with the 21 primary schools. That is why we are saying we do not need this amendment. Because the money is budgeted. It is in the plan. We are taking steps to deal with the delay that has arisen out of COVID to allow the pilot to be extended, and we put full sums of money aside in the year for 2022. That is it. We are not arguing over the benefits of school meals. To just try and reasonably conclude, it would have been helpful perhaps if Deputy Ward had spoken again to either the Minister for Education or the Minister for Children and Housing, or even the Minister for Treasury and Resources, just to understand the details on this. I think the telling remark, which I will just read out because it is reasonably succinct, is in the comments which basically says: "Finally, regardless of any amendment to the Government Plan or additional funding, neither the department nor any local service provider will be able to deliver an Island-wide fully equipped and operational service in the suggested timescales by the start of the September term 2021." I think we are in vehement agreement with a whole range of people who have talked about the benefits of school meals, the pilot scheme has started, we have extended the pilot scheme to cover the September term of 2021 and we have got significant sums of money in 2022 and 2023 to allow that scheme to be rolled out and, as always, so that we learn from the pilot scheme any of the practical difficulties of rolling it out to, in total, 21 primary schools. That is really the summary position and is why, in essence, we have rejected the amendment because the money is already in the plan. I do not think I can say any more than that and that is why we are not arguing against school meals; we are saying we do not need the money to do this, and on that basis would highly urge Members to reject this amendment. It is well-intentioned but the money is already in the budget for what is needed to be done.

**2.4.10 Deputy I. Gardiner:**

It is good to follow the Chief Minister and it is good to know that we agree on principle because it is really important that we agree on principle; what we are really debating is the speed of the introduction. During the last year I have social friends through the mothers who ask me why this school and not my school, why these children and not my children. It is going to be introduced in another school, and maybe not Island-wide, maybe in half of the schools, but it feels like 3 schools out of all primary schools, it is too low. We do have now lots of catering companies that, yes, it is

engagement, it is a tender process, it is a logistic; I understand it is not coming in one day, but we have lots of catering companies that now would be willing to supply good quality hot meals especially in this current economic situation. I would like to address 2 points to emphasise them, they have been addressed. One in 3 11 year olds will leave school overweight or obese, and data suggested that 85 per cent will remain that way into adulthood. In Jersey it costs the taxpayer £42 million per year in obesity-related social economic cost each and it is due to rise to £57 million by 2021. So for me the economy argument does not work, let us try to do more. Yes, it might cost more in the first year. I will not touch on nutritional value because it has been expanded. I will not touch the communal together, which I really agree and I think it is right. I will bring my personal experience to make the last point. I was born and went to school in a different reality and when I moved to live to the west almost 30 years ago one of my biggest shocks was why children do not have hot meals because this is what I had all my childhood since I went to the nursery and finished school at 17. It is important for me to cook and it is important for me to eat hot meals, and even hot lunches which I try to bring as often as possible even to this day; it is because this is how I grew up. I like hot meals. It is eating habits that we develop from our childhood and that will continue into our adult life. The second example, my daughter went to nursery where they did have food, they had hot lunches, and she went to school where she is bringing a lunch box. It is not that I am not trying to arrange her lunch box as best as possible but I can see already after a year at school her eating habits changed, and not to the best direction. As a parent we do have a duty and we do as much as we can to support our children and to give them the nutritional balanced meal in lunch boxes to school but it does not always work and, as we say, they are on their own. I do believe that children in nursery and primary school specifically - and it would be great to have it in all schools - will benefit greatly from hot nutritious meals at lunchtime. So I would be supporting this amendment.

#### **2.4.11 Deputy J.H. Perchard:**

The arguments in favour of the nutritional benefit are well made and have my complete support. The issue for me is the question of whether we should be providing school meals or not is a moral one; of course we should. But I do have some issues around the tendering process and some questions that I hope that the proposer will be able to address in his summing up, and I think this is probably just a matter of clarifying in his concluding remarks. But the wording of the proposition is such that it states that the outcome of this would be the extension of the school meals pilot to all fully state-funded primary schools with a view to Island-wide provision being in place by the start of term September 2021 at the latest or earlier if practicable. The pilot process was exempt from tender and since October 2019 I have submitted 3 sets of written questions on this matter to try and understand where that directive came from, what the rationale was for the exemption given the size of the contract, and if the intention was to carry on that exemption after the pilot had ended. The response I received clearly states that any subsequent programme for a wider rollout would result in a formal competitive tendering process, but that wider rollout was never considered as part of the pilot. So I know it seems semantic but we are talking about extending the pilot scheme in the context of having awarded a contract that was exempt from tender. So it does not matter who the supplier is, the fact is if the pilot scheme is extended then assumedly that same contract is the thing that will be extended, which inevitably will result in a change to the value of that contract; we are going from 2 state primary schools to all state primary schools. So I really need some clarity from the proposer around whether he is proposing that the pilot is the thing that is extended or whether we are talking about the pilot ending, that competitive tender process happening, and then the wider rollout following that competitive tender process. Because even though of course the supplier is reputable and is providing an excellent service, it is right that no matter who the supplier is we know how much is being spent on, say, salaries, for example, which is currently not something that is disclosed. It is really important that there is transparency around the spending of taxpayers' money, even on morally right and reputable expenditures. My questions around this are irrelevant to whether it is charitable or not, to whether it is a moral issue or not, to whether it is about children or not; it is about the tendering

process and about transparently spending taxpayers' money. I want to be reassured of the fact that a rollout will be accompanied by a full and new tendering process and will not be included with the current contract without that process being carried out. The rationale that I have received for that original 3-year exemption to tendering was apparently to gauge the level of uptake from parents. So the supplier was excused from tender because it was a pilot and assumedly the department thought it justifiable to excuse them from tender in order to gauge the efficacy of the scheme. We are not discussing the merits of that argument today. So if the proposer can assure me that a wider rollout to the other state schools will be accompanied by a proper tendering process that would be really helpful because that is the thing that I am unsure about because the wording in the proposition says it is an extension of the current pilot, which could be read perhaps as an extension of the current contract with the current supplier. Or perhaps the intent is the pilot would be seen to have ended and the wider rollout would require a tendering process.

#### **2.4.12 Deputy K.F. Morel:**

Similarly to Deputy Perchard, I have concerns which are making it difficult for me to support this proposition because Deputy Perchard is also correct. The moral case of this is absolutely there, it fits in with the Government's strategic priorities of putting children first, and also we have heard about the impact on obesity, long-term wellness of Islanders, young children who will grow up to be adults who we would hope through this sort of scheme are able to understand nutrition better and eat better. There are huge long-term benefits to be gained; of that I have no doubt whatsoever, and in that sense I want to support this proposition.

[17:15]

But I, like Deputy Perchard, have concerns about the tendering process, and certainly there would have to be a proper tendering process which, given that this is for September 2021, definitely shortens the amount of time that it would be available to schools to get the facilities correct and to the Minister to get facilities correct, *et cetera*, because tender processes take time. I do note in the proposer's report he does mention a tender process but only as a passing comment. I think that according to the Public Finance manual and its rules there would have to be a tender process. But where I really get stuck is when the Minister for Education - who is someone I hold in high esteem and someone who perhaps, most importantly, I do trust - tells me that the schools just do not have the facilities to do this at the moment and it would take several hundred thousands of pounds to bring those schools up to the level of facilities they need in terms of building works and so on to fit them out in the way that is needed, that is where I have a problem. Because as an Assembly it is really difficult for us, in fact wrong of us, to tell the Minister for Education to do something that she believes she cannot do. That is where I am finding it difficult to support this proposition because the Minister for Education is telling us that she cannot do this. Certainly from what I can understand from the pricing perspective, as well as the £500,000 or so that the proposition asks for, there would need to be another £700,000 or so brought in for capital works. So that for me is the problem. It is not right for us to tell the Minister for Education to do something that she cannot do. At the moment I have no reason to believe that she is incorrect on that; maybe other facts will come to light that tell me otherwise. But for that reason I am struggling to support it, despite the fact that this is absolutely morally the right thing to do, and I would hope that when we look at 2022 we will be seeing this as part of the Government Plan in 2022. But it needs to be done in a way that can be delivered by the Minister for Education, otherwise we are voting for something that cannot be done and that is not a good place to be in.

#### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

There has been some discussion in the chat about the wording of the proposition and it has been pointed out that the wording of the proposition is a matter for the Chair, which of course is correct insofar as it goes, but the wording in the proposition merely indicates that this is a proposal to allow the extension of the school meals pilot to all fully state-funded primary schools. There is nothing in



the proposition dealing with the underlying contractual position and accordingly the Chair is unable to assist in terms of whether there will be a new contract with new suppliers or an extension of the current contract with the current supplier as it is not contained in the wording of the proposition.

#### **2.4.13 Deputy J.A. Martin:**

I am not confused but I am not sure if there is some confusion about firstly the pilot. I speak now because I think we are going to summing up and I would be grateful for the proposer to shed some light on this. I absolutely agree with the last speaker that I would not want to force the Education Department into anything that they feel they cannot do. But I want to ask what the actual money is proposing. I keep reading the proposition and we are talking about pupil premium children but extending all facilities able to provide hot meals in every primary school. I am hoping the proposer, because I think Deputy Tadier interpreted it this way, and I would too, that that would then allow for every primary child to have a meal. Some will be free under this. Then that is my second problem of - when the Minister for Education spoke, and I know there is some early work going on - how do we identify without identifying children? I speak from personal experience being at a school always ... I was shocked when I came to Jersey, like Deputy Gardiner. Primary and secondary school, but it was when we used to bring our dinner money on a Monday and certain people used to sit back. If your circumstances changed you would sit back and everybody used to ask you why you did not pay for your dinners. I pose this because I think the Chief Minister, we are all pushing at the same door. If it becomes apparent that we need more, but I am not clear here and surely we would not be extending all these facilities, building facilities in primary schools, for 1,595 children or so many percentage. Then I have that bigger problem, which I do know the work has to be done on just making it seamless so that everybody can sit down and eat together. It encourages children to eat their vegetables. Who is paying and where? We need that data and we need to come up with a solution. If I have got that wrong from the proposer I hope he can explain that when he sums up. Just for his benefit, I am not always against Deputy Ward.

#### **The Deputy Bailiff:**

Does any other Member wish to speak? Accordingly I invite Deputy Ward to reply?

#### **2.4.14 Deputy R.J. Ward:**

I will really try and deal with those last points clearly. I desperately do not want us to lose something that is so good over what is a technicality. Deputy Perchard is just so much better with the use of English than me, I think we have different specialisms, and I totally respect that, and she knows that. The proposition states about extending the pilot but then in the comments goes on to talk about 3 years. A pilot is not for 3 years. Perhaps I should have worded it differently. The idea is that the pilot has happened and that facility be extended to all primary schools. With all the discussions I had on that, that point did not come up, that it could be misinterpreted. Yes, it absolutely is not just the pilot keeping going, which therefore means that it will go out to tender. I cannot remember who it was, it might have been Deputy Maçon, I do not know, it may not have been. It may have been the Chief Minister actually. I did meet with Caring Cooks who run this because, and I will explain the background of this in a moment, to say to them: "Can you extend this? What is the reality here?" The Minister for Children and Housing was there at that time because it was before there was a change in Minister, and we sat down and said: "Look, can you extend this?" and the answer I got, and I have again an email about it, is: "Yes, it can be extended" and they are fully expecting to face a tendering process. Effectively before it would not have been tendered for probably because it was too small and not economic because the price for meals is expensive, but as you extend it the price per meal goes down because you get an economy of scale. For Deputy Martin, I can remember taking dinner money in as well; schools have changed so much. You do not have that issue of: "Here is your dinner money", "Oh, you have got free school meals." That is not happening any more. Schools do absolute miracles in the way they ... Jersey premium, you do not have children say: "Oh, you are

the Jersey premium child, you are not.” It is not done that way. It is done with delicacy. Children do not know. They are just with their friends. That is all that is happening. The cost is towards the preparation of the meals. I did also speak to head teachers, and I am not going to mention individual schools, I do not think it is fair because it was a private conversation, but when I said: “How would you sort out the serving?” The answer I got was: “We will sort that. This is such a good thing to do, we will sort that.” That can-do attitude is what I am really asking for from the Assembly on this situation. Yes, it will be tendered for, so the cost in my amendment is for the supplying of the meals at the percentage uptake that is usual and it is in my accompanying report I believe, which I do understand is quite long, and the child impact assessment. The Minister for Education, I am not trying to be difficult, I am just trying to support, and I am not trying to set you up with something you cannot do. I believe this can be done. If it is not in place by September I am not going to be on anyone’s case about it, but if it can be, think about the impact it will have just extending it to half the schools and more. Then the rest by the end of the year. So many propositions we have talked about today. We just talked about a proposition on an amendment I agreed last year, and we are a year and a bit in and stuff, nothing has happened. But the Chief Minister is happy to say: “But do not worry, it will be done.” But on this occasion he is saying we have to oppose this because we cannot say it can be done on time. I would ask the Chief Minister, please, to change his mind and support this. In terms of the money, this is from the Economic Recovery Fund and if we get to a stage where it is not all needed or not all spent, as I said before, it will be returned. Therefore, there is no problem with that. The reason we cannot delay is that children have one chance at school. We hear that so often. So another year or so will make a significant difference to those children’s lives and the quicker we implement this on a school-by-school basis, and I would put my neck on the line and say if you go to primary schools and say: “We are offering you this free meal facility, can you do something with it?” you will have them biting your hand off - excuse the pun - in order to get this in place. I believe this really can be done. Deputy Maçon, I think the comments about parents, and I think Deputy Doublet dealt with him very well. With the best will in the world as a parent you try your hardest, and I recognise time but I will get on with it. When my son was young we tried absolutely everything to get him to eat different food. He would eat one thing and that was white bread jam sandwiches. I am a teacher and my wife was a midwife and we were ashamed sending him to school with these sandwiches but he would not eat anything else. But it was when he went to secondary school and he was having to buy his own food and deal with it that he, with his friends, started to eat different stuff. It is exactly what Deputy Doublet said. When you put children together they do eat differently. That is so important. Providing that food, that hot meal, in a day I think will have more significant impact than you realise. Deputy Gardiner summed it up really well when she talked about how her daughter went from a hot meal and her eating habits changed. If you want to speak to this economically, the financial benefits of developing children so that we do have a decrease in obesity, we do have more awareness about what healthy eating is. You can ingrain them in your children. I go back to my son again, he is a devout vegan and he has been so convinced of that in this time and we are influenced by him massively. So children also influence parents. That is such an important thing for us to remember. A couple of more things before I ask people to give this their vote. I mentioned it was targeted. I tried a different system of taking notes on bits of paper; do not think it works for me that well. Senator Pallett, I agree, he is correct about breakfasts and meals. I can remember being in school and seeing the breakfast clubs. I had a similar experience when I was a teacher of seeing kids who were always late but they were on time for breakfast. It was fantastic to see because food is one of the primary reinforcers that we have in society. I will finish by saying this: I started my teaching career in Tower Hamlets, the most deprived borough in London. That is also where I grew up but that is no reflection on me. I can remember being in the secondary school that I learnt to teach in and at lunchtime there would be hot meals served. I realised eventually I was being conned to do a duty without being paid by just given a hot meal. We used to sit with the students and eat in a supervisory role. You got to know the students, they queued up, they were civilised, they were great with each other. They ate their food. They had a decent meal. When they went out into the playground they

got into all sorts of trouble but that was different. It was such an important part of the day. I think we are forgetting it. We need to reinstate it in our schools. We need to reinstate hot meals for our children in primary.

[17:30]

We need to really put our foot to the metal and try to do this as quickly as possible. I would please urge that Deputy Morel and Deputy Perchard, do not worry about the tendering process, do not worry about the speed, I am sure this can be done. Please take a can-do attitude to this. I will ask the Minister, the Assistant Minister and the Chief Minister to support this as well. Let us give it a vote, let us finish the day with a really positive thing for Jersey, and I ask for the *appel*.

### The Deputy Bailiff:

Thank you, Deputy. In a moment, the Greffier will add a vote into the chat channel of this meeting. She has done so. I invite Members to cast their votes. If all Members have had the opportunity to cast their votes in the chat or on the link then I ask the Greffier to close the voting. The amendment has been narrowly rejected: 19 votes *pour* in the link and 24 votes *contre*, plus 4 votes in the chat giving a total of 22 votes *pour* and 25 votes *contre*.

<b>POUR: 22</b>		<b>CONTRE: 25</b>		<b>ABSTAIN: 0</b>
Senator K.L. Moore		Senator I.J. Gorst		
Senator S.W. Pallett		Senator L.J. Farnham		
Senator S.Y. Mézec		Senator S. Ferguson		
Connétable of St. Helier		Senator J.A.N. Le Fondré		
Connétable of St. Lawrence		Senator T.A. Vallois		
Connétable of St. Peter		Connétable of St. Clement		
Connétable of St. Martin		Connétable of St. Brelade		
Deputy G.P. Southern (H)		Connétable of Grouville		
Deputy M. Tadier (B)		Connétable of St. John		
Deputy M.R. Higgins (H)		Connétable of St. Mary		
Deputy of St. Martin		Connétable of St. Ouen		
Deputy L.M.C. Doublet (S)		Deputy J.A. Martin (H)		
Deputy of St. Mary		Deputy of Grouville		
Deputy J.H. Young (B)		Deputy K.C. Lewis (S)		
Deputy of St. John		Deputy J.M. Maçon (S)		
Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat (H)		Deputy S.J. Pinel (C)		
Deputy S.M. Ahier (H)		Deputy of St. Ouen		
Deputy J.H. Perchard (S)		Deputy R. Labey (H)		
Deputy R.J. Ward (H)		Deputy S.M. Wickenden (H)		
Deputy C.S. Alves (H)		Deputy G.J. Truscott (B)		
Deputy K.G. Pamplin (S)		Deputy L.B.E. Ash (C)		

Deputy I. Gardiner (H)		Deputy K.F. Morel (L)		
		Deputy G.C.U. Guida (L)		
		Deputy of St. Peter		
		Deputy of Trinity		

**The Deputy Greffier of the States:**

Voting *pour* in the chat: Deputy of St. Mary, Deputy Perchard and Deputy Southern. In the link voting *pour*: Deputy of St. Martin, Deputy Pamplin, Senator Mézec, Deputy Ward, Deputy Alves, Deputy Doublet, Deputy Le Hagarat, Deputy Ahier, the Connétable of St. Helier, Deputy Higgins, Deputy Tadier, Deputy Young, the Connétable of St. Martin, Deputy Gardiner, Senator Moore, Senator Pallett, the Connétable of St. Peter, Deputy of St. John and the Connétable of St. Lawrence. Voting *contre* in the chat: Deputy of St. Ouen. Then: the Constable of Grouville, Deputy of St. Peter, Deputy of Grouville, Senator Gorst, Deputy Wickenden, Deputy Guida, Deputy Martin, Deputy Truscott, Senator Farnham, the Connétable of St. Ouen, Deputy Morel, Deputy Ash, Deputy Pinel, the Connétable of St. Brelade, Senator Vallois, Senator Ferguson, Deputy of Trinity, Deputy Lewis, Senator Le Fondré, the Connétable of St. Clement, the Connétable of St. John, Deputy Labey, Deputy Maçon and the Connétable of St. Mary.

**Deputy R.J. Ward:**

May I just ask for very final numbers? Was that 24 to 23?

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

Yes, 22 votes *pour* and 25 votes *contre* was what we totalled.

**Senator I.J. Gorst:**

I call for the adjournment.

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

The adjournment is proposed. Is that seconded? **[Seconded]** Does anyone wish to oppose the adjournment now? The Assembly stands adjourned until 9.30 a.m. tomorrow morning.

**ADJOURNMENT**

[17:36]