

STATES OF JERSEY

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Hearing with the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture

FRIDAY, 6th FEBRUARY 2009

Panel:

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier of St. Saviour (Chairman)
Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier
Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade

Witnesses:

Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture)
Mr. M. Lundy (Director of Education, Sport and Culture)

Present:

Miss. S. Power (Scrutiny Officer)

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier of St. Saviour (Chairman):

I would like to welcome you here to the formal hearing of the Scrutiny Panel where we have as our guest, so to speak, the Minister for Education, Deputy Reed, and the Director of Education, Mario Lundy. I would like to welcome members of the public and the other member of the ministerial team from Education, Deputy Green. We will introduce ourselves for the recording record and then we will move into session mode.

I am Roy Le Hérisssier, Deputy of St. Saviour.

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

I am Deputy Tadier, Deputy of St. Brelade.

Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier:

Deputy Pitman of St. Helier No. 1.

Miss. S. Power (Scrutiny Officer)

Sam Power, Scrutiny Officer)

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Thank you very much. Our 2 guests, if they would like to put it on the record.

Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):

Deputy James Reed, Minister for Education, Sport and Culture.

Mr. M. Lundy (Director of Education, Sport and Culture):

Mario Lundy, Director of Education, Sport and Culture.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Thank you very much indeed. Now, the purpose of this meeting is basically to go over a whole lot of policy issues that affect Education, Sport and Culture. It is to basically give the panel a fix, so to speak, in the nicest possible way, on what the key issues and what the thinking is of the Minister and his team. We hope, because we are slightly behind because as you can see - and I do apologise by the way for the absence of Constable Butcher of St. John who cannot be with us - we are slightly behind in that we have to very quickly come up with a programme of reviews and we do hope to finalise that on either Tuesday or Wednesday of the coming week. So that is why it has been very fortuitous that we have now got the Minister and his team here

so that we can go over the issues. But that is the intention. The panel has talked about various issues to do with E.S.C. (Education, Sport and Culture) obviously before today, but the intention is to get the thinking of the Minister and his team on these key issues and then we will go away and finalise our programme. Now I have been asked whether, as a panel, we can look into individual issues and we do not look into individual issues. There is an embargo on that in terms of our code of conduct, and the form for that would be either obviously the usual procedures of the States behind the Assembly or within the Assembly itself, but as a body we, as a body, do not do that. So, it is going to be a very broad ranging thing. We will try and keep the tempo going but there will clearly be supplementaries we will have to ask and obviously some members of the panel, as you will see from the questions, have got quite strong interests in certain areas but we hope not to get into massive debates. We have to sort of keep the pace moving, so to speak. What we will do, first of all, we are going to ask for the members of the audience, some of these questions come out of the Business Plan so they may not, on the surface, look to be totally logical but they have come from that document so, in a way, that is the background. I will just ask the first question based on our analysis of the Business Plan. With regards to objective 1 under Success Criteria of the Business Plan, to do with early years education, what is the likely impact on the early years education and care strategy of the recent Scrutiny Report?

The Deputy of St. Owen:

I think the impact is quite great. I think that the Scrutiny Panel provided a very useful report which helped to crystallise and identify certain areas that needed to be addressed. One of the areas that ... and out of that obviously came the development of

a framework for a new public-private partnership which is in the process of being finalised and agreed, and arrangements are currently in place for an independent chairperson. Negotiations are also well underway with private providers to consider the capacity, because obviously that is an issue, that will be available from September. Also the Jersey Child Care Trust has been involved and is due to launch a new children's information service that hopefully will be able to provide the relevant information for the parents to make informed choices.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

We do have it later, Deputy, but we may as well ask it now; when do you intend to press the button and set up ...

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think, as you are well aware, we had a debate in September and the decision of the States was that it should be active from September 2009. I do have a concern, and it is the concern that I did raise during that debate whether or not the funding and the process was sufficient to provide a truly equitable access to preschool. This is still an issue that we will need to resolve in some shape or form.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

So have your preliminary inquiries given you great cause for concern in that area?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would not say great cause for concern because obviously we are still developing the plan and the programme, however I think I would like to flag up the issue that perhaps the funding is not as sufficient as it might be.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Despite the sum that was put forward as necessary?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Absolutely. I think, as I say, I would refer you to that debate and the comments I made during that debate. We shall relent to, I hasten to add, the Scrutiny Report that had been provided and also the Jersey Child Care Trust report and recommendations that came out of that.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The funding was calculated on the basis of predicted numbers, and the unforeseen is whether there are children on the Island below the age of 5 who might have been in other forms of childcare who we may not have known about. It is inevitable that each year when the primary schools do their admissions that some children turn up who we did not know about. So really the unpredictability is around (a) that, and (b) around capacity because it is important that the private sector providers enter into this partnership because the funding arrangement will only be provided to recognised partners. So really capacity depends on how many partners join the scheme and the early indications are very positive. Most partners seem to want to join the scheme, so that is a good thing.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

But in terms of what you might call the grey area of childcare, did you put a notional number in to cover this area when the estimates were produced?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The number is based on the funding arrangement. The funding projections are based on figures that we have used annually for a number of years and they are usually within one or 2 per cent, and we have made arrangements in the department to cover any margin for error.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Good. As I said, we are going to revisit some of these issues as the session proceeds, but I will ask Deputy Pitman to move to the next topic.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Yes, that is objective 1(2). The Business Plan indicates that a revised literacy strategy will be developed and implemented in early years, primary and secondary schools. Who will review this and develop this, who are the key stakeholders involved and are there any indications at this stage of the key revisions likely to be made?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

First of all, who will review it and who will the key stakeholders be? I think it will obviously be teachers, officers of the department, the literacy co-ordinators and perhaps include businesses and their comments, as well as parents. I think that it is an area that has regularly been revisited and there are issues that you need to be aware of.

Within our schools we have to, obviously, provide for many individuals with different abilities and the challenge, and I think it will continue to be a challenge, is how the department meets the individual needs of particular people.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The department will take the lead on this. The stakeholders will primarily be officers, teachers, head teachers, literacy co-ordinators. The library will have a big part to play in this. Parenting will have a big part to play in this. There will be 2 aspects to this, one will be around a universal provision ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is what it should be right across the Island. We have every confidence in that at the moment. Then there is the targeted provision. What do you do with youngsters who may be struggling for some particular ... some very good reasons to develop the appropriate literacy skills. In terms of key revisions there is a lot that has already started to happen, so if you view this as some big strategy that is going to be launched at a point during the next year, then that is probably not a good description of the way it is going to be. This is about drawing together a number of threads that already exist and some new initiatives. We judge our literacy standards on the basis of when you get to G.C.S.E. (General Certificate of Secondary Education) status a number of young people who get an A star to C at G.C.S.E. in English. I do not personally think that is a great indicator of literacy. So that is the first thing. There are some national initiatives to change that, which is around bringing foundation skills into the G.C.S.E. so that young people doing that subject will have to demonstrate a standard of function of literacy in order to get the G.C.S.E. But I think sometimes this is ... it is interpreted as illiteracy, which it is not. This is just about driving up standards of literacy. So some of the things that we have put in place already is that clearly we

would be raising awareness. It is in the Business Plan. We have talked to schools about it. Every head teacher has been asked to ensure that in the performance review and appraisal of teachers that there is a discussion about literacy, regardless of what subject that they teach. We have invested in 2 initiatives; one is a precise and focused teaching strategy which has been developed by Warwick University, which is called Early Reading Research. That is a precision teaching method for the youngest children to try and help them develop their skills. Schools are resourced to deliver reading recovery, so that is targeted to the youngsters who are struggling. Two years ago we introduced screening for all year 4 children and this year we have introduced it for all year 7 children, so we now have hard data right across the Island to show us what standards are like. We have introduced professional partnering for schools which is a new arrangement for governance and accountability, which will enable, if you like, a client relationship manager at the department to discuss with individual schools standards and to challenge and support the schools in terms of how they are delivering those standards. We are hoping to put in place a conference in September for key professionals, a professional conference about developing quality in teaching standards of literacy. A learning group of head teachers has been set up to examine the balance between skills and content in the primary curriculum, particularly, which is quite a packed curriculum.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Can I ask; is that group up and running already?

Mr. M. Lundy:

That group has just completed its work in the sense that the purpose for the group was to hold a debate with other head teachers and teachers around the Island and to come to a consensus as to whether the current primary curriculum was suitable, both in terms of content but also in the balance between content and skills. The result is that it is a packed curriculum because it has been based pretty much on the U.K. (United Kingdom) national curriculum which we believe to be a packed curriculum. So what we are now going to do is look at other models, including the International Primary Baccalaureate. So we get to look at other models rather than reinvent the wheel.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

How long would you envisage that taking?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Curriculum change can take some time because once you have determined the curriculum you have then got to start training, so professional development of teachers, et cetera, you are probably looking around about 3 years from start to finish, to develop the new curriculum.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Just one last question to the Minister; what, when you review literacy policy, what to you will be the mark that you have succeeded?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I suppose the mark is that we have met individual's needs. I suppose that is the ultimate goal, surely, that we should all have. That we not only identify the areas that enhance the potential of the individual, but also to enable them to get there.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The department will be able to provide the Minister with data that shows how youngsters are progressing on transition. So, from primary to secondary the number of youngsters who are needing additional support hopefully would reduce from secondary to further education, the youngsters needing additional support would reduce, so there would be some hard data in there that would give us some indication of the success of the strategy.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Would you not agree that in an affluent Island like Jersey surely we should not accept anything but 100 per cent literacy in all our young people? Are you confident that can be achieved?

Mr. M. Lundy:

In terms of G.C.S.E. results, which I say is not the best indicator, we are looking at around 99 per cent of young people coming out with some sort of G.C.S.E. grade in English. So if you use that as an indicator, bearing in mind the reservations I have about that, then the majority of our youngsters are literate to some extent. We are not talking about that. We are talking about driving up standards. We are well ahead of the U.K. at the moment, but we are not satisfied.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

When you say, Mr. Lundy, “to some extent”, do you mean to an extent that they can function in society and that an employer will be reasonably satisfied?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Absolutely.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

That is the underpinning premise, if you like, of the development of functional skills in the G.C.S.E. The G.C.S.E. will have to reflect in future that standard of achieving.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think that there is a greater challenge, perhaps. It is one of culture that we are now a computer generation and communication is done by the mobile phone and text and it reduces the ability for young people to communicate with each other verbally, and it is a challenge that we, as the Education Department, and parents in particular, I think, need to be considering. This is where, I suppose with another hat on, we are aiming to encourage sort of active involvement, whether it is in sport, whether it is in the Youth Service and so on and so forth, that these youngsters do participate in social activity rather than just limited to sort of being on their own in front of a computer screen, games console or, as I say, using a mobile phone to text messages to their friends.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Good point, thank you. I will now move to Deputy Tadier.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I just want to follow up very briefly to the director, Mr. Lundy; I may have picked this up incorrectly but there seems to be an inherent contradiction in what was said. First of all it was said that judging literacy levels on the basis of A star to C grade and that is achieved at school, it is not necessarily a good indicator of literacy or certainly functioning literacy in society, but then we are told that 99 per cent of children who come out of schools are literate, functionally literate. First of all, where do we get that figure of 99 per cent or how accurate is it?

Mr. M. Lundy:

The first thing on the figure is I would need to check the figure exactly for you, but what we are talking about is the number of children who would leave school with G.C.S.E. English, A star to G, the full range of grades. So, it is not a contradiction in the sense that it is the only true indicator that we have outside of teacher assessment. I mean we have teacher assessment that tells us standards of literacy across cohorts of youngsters. But that is not an objective assessment in the sense that it is not done by somebody else. So the G.C.S.E. is not a great indicator but it is the only one we have at the moment and against that indicator, which is the same indicator that is used in the U.K., we appear to do pretty well. We are not satisfied either with the indicator or what the indicator tells us, so hopefully with the introduction of the new functional element of the G.C.S.E., which will literally be about the practical use of the language, practical literacy, and also practical numeracy, the use of basic numbers, that will be a much better indicator, so once that comes into play I think we will have harder stats, but at the same time we have the information that we are getting from

year 4 screening and year 7 screening, and there is a real potency to this in a jurisdiction like this because we should be able to identify, for example, the reading level of every child in the Island of that age to ask why, if any are not making progress as you would expect, why they are not making progress and to make sure that resources are channelled into those specific children in order to help them succeed.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Thank you very much. We better move on.

Deputy M. Tadier:

The next part as regards to objective 1 part (v) about developing a comprehensive strategy, what are the proposed objectives of the strategy and does it have any bearing on the findings of a review of the Jersey Youth Service, October 2008?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I suppose the aim of this strategy is to pull together all the strands of services to ensure that there is a co-ordinated and comprehensive strategy for engaging and working with the young people of our Island. That is easy to say, it is much harder to do but it includes working with the Youth Service, our sports organisations and associations, it links in with the community development initiatives, also housing associations, the Bridge, Youth Action team, and indeed the cultural organisation. So I suppose it is ... and perhaps first and foremost it is trying to improve and create and enhance the voice of the young people so that they feel a greater part of our overall community.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Thank you, Minister. There has been the point put forward which was not directly addressed in a way in the report of October but we did raise, as you know, in our letter to which you kindly replied. Do you think the Youth Service is over managed?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I do not believe so. I do think that we need, as always, to look at the resources available and utilise in the best form. If we are going to have a comprehensive strategy you need to have some management to organise it and co-ordinate a lot of our different organisations, bearing in mind that a lot of the organisations and individuals involved, even in the Youth Service who obviously are volunteers, and they need to be properly supported. So, I would not say anything is written in stone, and I think the latest report or review that has been conducted recognise that. In all cases development and improvement can be made and, as a department, I would hope it has been the norm, we will strive to achieve and improve areas where we believe they have an influence and improvement can be made.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

In terms of that report, Mr. Minister, what jumped out at you? What did you say: “I need to really look in more detail at this because I am not too happy with what I am reading”? Anything jump out at you at that point?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am not necessarily saying that anything jumped out at me from the report, it has confirmed the fact that although we use many words that revolve around encouraging our young people to play a part in our community and become a part, an important part, perhaps for various reasons, and there are no easy solution to this, perhaps we have not been as successful as we might, and I think that Youth Forum and engaging the way I call the hard to reach, perhaps individuals that do not necessarily arrive at the front of the Youth Club, it is a difficult challenge, but it is one that I do believe that we are meeting, and have recognised that in the report.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think from a director's perspective, as I am responsible for the administrative leadership of the Youth Service, the thing that jumped out at me in the report is that the morale of the service and the effectiveness of the service has increased dramatically since the last time it was reviewed. That is the first thing that jumped out. The other thing that jumped out at me is stuff that I know the Youth Service themselves have already started to talk about, which is how you look at your outcomes and how you are able to demonstrate that you are doing a good job. In terms of the management of the service, I think it is important to remember that the last few times that we went to appoint a principal youth officer we had to go off Island to appoint that officer and on going off Island, on one occasion, had to advertise the post more than once. So, the construction of a management ... the introduction of a management structure does not just allow you to manage the service more effectively, it provides the opportunity for you to develop other individuals so that hopefully succession planning can take place on it.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

If I could just come in on that point, and I take on board a lot of what you are saying. Are you aware that any research was undertaken before the format of management structure that we have got was put in place because Jersey is only 9 by 5 at the end of the day. You certainly would not have the same management work ratio within the U.K. areas.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The honest answer to that is I am not aware of research and I probably would not be because I have no responsibility for the Youth Service when the management structure was introduced. So I cannot answer that question. But I could find out if that was the case.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Is that something which you would consider, because I think it is an important one and value for money?

Mr. M. Lundy:

If you would wish us to provide the panel with any information about the research that was done into the management structure before it was developed I would see if we could provide that for you.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I would think it would be a group decision but I think we would ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Yes, we would be very keen on that. Thank you. We will be coming back to these issues under other headings, by the way. The next one, we are now going to enter into the schools and colleges area of your department and obviously these are big, big issues, but first of all the Business Plan shows an intention to scope an inclusion review and implement the results in 2009. What areas will this review, this inclusion review, be looking at and who will be leading the reviews?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would like to initially pass this question on to my Chief Officer as this was a development that was planned and organised prior to myself taking up the position of Minister. I am sure that you would get far more detailed and important information from him.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Given the structure of education of Jersey, particularly the structure and organisation of secondary education in Jersey, we have a high proportion of young people in fee paying education. You have a selective system at 14. That means that you have a small cohort of schools, particularly in the secondary phase, carrying the whole Island's inclusion again. If you think about the 2 extremes for inclusion. On the one hand it is about trying to ensure that every youngster, regardless of their need, gets the opportunity to have a mainstream education. The other end, which I think is the approach that Guernsey adopted, was to develop the special schools around the mainstream so that some of the youngsters would not necessarily get the mainstream education but they would be in a specialist provision. We have a blend. But the

question that I particularly wanted to ask from a director's perspective was how is that inclusion agenda working? Is it realistic, given the structure and organisation of the schools? So what we have done is we are going to engage obviously professionals across the service and teachers, special needs co-ordinators, et cetera, but it is going to be undertaken by an external who is a former principal educational psychologist and Director of Education from a local authority in the U.K. The objectives, if you do not mind I will read through them because I have pulled them off the draft document: "To establish an accurate baseline on key outcome areas to compare the position of Jersey against our statistical neighbours." So we have certain benchmark authorities that we look to. "To establish the views of the key stakeholders, schools, officers, elected representatives, parents, pupils." On the current policies the practices that we currently use and the provisions for meeting special needs of pupils. "To establish the views of the key stakeholders on the impact of the investments that we have made." We have made considerable investment around the time of the Kathy Bull report we developed teams in each of these schools. "To identify current areas of good practice and also to look at the perceived barriers to extending or supporting inclusive practices in the schools." So those are pretty much the broad areas that the inclusion review will look at. It is an honest review in the sense that it is hard at this stage to predict what the outcome might look like.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

What, Mr. Lundy, is your view? It strikes me from your preliminary remarks that you feel the system which has such a high proportion at the secondary level of fee paying students, it is approximately 40 per cent; is that correct?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is approximately 40 per cent.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

So, the States system is having to carry an awful lot with the remainder basically of those students. Are you sceptical about the inclusion policy that we have followed to date?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is not for me to make that comment. That is a political position.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Be brave.

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is for me to tell you what the situation is and the consequences of that situation, but obviously the politics and the merits or demerits of the policy are for political consideration.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

If you were in an ideal world what kind of inclusive policy would you like to see?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think that is just another way of asking me the same question.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Indeed it is.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I have to give you the same answer.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

We could ask the Minister what he feels about inclusion.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Well, I think my focus is again on those that perhaps are hard to reach, those with special needs. I do believe that the department has done a terrific amount in providing for these youngsters. I think that, as always, there is more that could be done. It was highlighted in the Kathy Bull report, I think in the Williamson Report, and followed in the Implementation Plan that they have highlighted also where a greater inclusion could be developed. As I say, I come back to, I suppose, the original point, is that I do believe that we have made, and we should be proud of the fact that the forms of inclusion and the efforts that have been placed into including all youngsters into our educational system should be applauded.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Sorry, this is becoming possibly a hobby horse; there was a very interesting article in the *Times* this week. Did you read it, about a school in one of the London boroughs where the headmistress is running a special ... not a special needs school but a school to deal with excluded kids of about 35 and her claim to fame is she has thrown out the

rulebook basically. She clearly believed it was necessary to take people out of the mainstream to allow them to act out in a sort of separate environment and to really address their needs in a much more individual sense, needs which would otherwise be swamped in the mainstream system. Does that tend to be your thinking?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am well aware of that, and I call it early intervention. It is not perhaps a good word but it describes what I am looking for, and I think the department as a whole is working towards that it identifies issues and concerns at an early age, it then supports those young people in dealing with those issues if they are temporary. Some of them may not be, I hasten to add, and reintegrate them back into the classroom environment. If they are more permanent then obviously the challenge is to provide for their needs. I think, it is, if you like, a multi-pronged approach to do with a big title.

Mr. M. Lundy:

There is of course the breadth of provision, a breadth of provision, already in Jersey in that you have a primary level at St. James School, secondary level you have d'Hautree High School, you have the old kind of curriculum ,and I think 3 out of the 4 11-16 schools having learning support units within the school. So you have that breadth. The question is, is there enough?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

I am disappointed ... and then I will keep quiet because I think Deputy Tadier may wish to come in. What feedback have you had, Mr. Lundy, from the secondary

school head teachers as to how they are handling the current system? What do they tell you about the current system?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It depends where in the current system those secondary head teachers work.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

But those, for example, who are handling the 11-14 schools, what sort of feedback have they given you?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think they have a broad range of challenges. The majority of pupils in those schools are very good pupils who work and achieve very, very good results, and those schools when you look at the results and you look at the value added are very good schools. They are performing. Some of them have challenges which are to do with a particular context. There are catchment areas perhaps. Those schools need additional support, additional resources, and head teachers would tell me when they feel they need those additional resources and additional support.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

I will keep quiet.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I will not come in because it will take too long.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier:

We will move on to the next topic: sex education. Deputy Pitman.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

It was interesting your description there of early intervention and identifying concerns at an early age. What is the department's policy with regard to sex education and what changes, if any, do you, as a new Minister, propose to make to it?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am informed that the department's policy makes sure that sex and relationship education can be firmly rooted in the framework of the personal social and health education, that the teaching should take account of the fact that sex and relationship education is about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect and care. It is about the teaching of sex and sexual health. However it is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity which would be inappropriate.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Just to pick up on the point about not the promotion of any kind of sexual orientation, and conversely it should also not be about the repression of any type of sexual orientation, there must be an acknowledgement at least within the system of different types of sexual orientation, I would imagine.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Within the curriculum that would ...

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

At least. I was going to ask, do you have any evidence that that is not the case?

Deputy M. Tadier:

It has been a long time since I was at school. I suspect that when I was at school it was not the case.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Just on what changes, if any, do I wish to make; I would not say it is necessary changes but I do think that over the next 3 years I would like to review the effectiveness of the present personal, social and health education programme that we are conducting because I am well aware, speaking to agencies such as Brook, that indeed instead of containing, for argument's sake, sexually transmitted diseases, we are seeing a quite large increase in this area. Furthermore they are also identifying a much younger age group of young people that are accessing the services provided by Brook and it does make me question the effectiveness, as I say, of the present programme. I also acknowledge that in part it could equally be regarded as a cultural change in the way socially and as a group of individuals we consider and look at sexual relationships.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Without risking making it a personal hobby horse, as my colleague, I was at risk of earlier, do you not concede that there certainly is a perception that homosexuality, lesbianism among young people, do you not concede that there is the perspective that

that is an issue which the education system has really failed to get to grips with. It is almost a taboo issue to a degree. I know you are a new Minister but I have to ask that question.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am fine. I do not believe that that is the case. I think that ... I would just like to add that we tend to forget that there is another group of people that need to be involved in this area, and it is not just responsibility of the Education Department to educate children and young people in sex and relationships. The parents have a role to play and I suppose perhaps that is where greater dialogue needs to take place. I am well aware that young people can be impressionable and we need to clearly express and outline the benefits, if you like, from the good relationships.

Mr. M. Lundy:

There are 2 strands to this. There is the curriculum and education strand, which is around the teaching of sex and about relationships, and obviously sexual health. Then there is the pastoral strand, which is around supporting individuals who may wish to discuss their own problems, their own development with a pastor which is within the schools. Now, the first is a public curriculum and when you look at that do you say "Are there areas where you could improve." We would always hope to be improving the curriculum. We would always hope to be improving the quality of teaching and learning in order to make sure that it is most effective. In terms of the pastoral side of it; that is not necessarily open for all to view. It can be where young people go to discuss with a tutor their own concerns, which make it their own concerns about their

sexuality, and that is not something that would normally be noticed by people in and around the school system. I think that is appropriate.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Could I just ask one more question and I will move on? With regards to new initiatives really, the Minister might not remember this but Mr. Lundy might, probably about 10 years ago there was a proposal and an initiative started to offer young gay and lesbian people a phone helpline. Now this was dropped very quickly after the person, I think it was from Health, who was running this had his house attacked, graffitied and it was dropped very quickly. Promotional material was ditched, we were told to take it down. Now to me that seems a very positive avenue to explore. Would the Minister be willing to look at that again, even on a trial basis?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I know nothing about it. Certainly it is my intention to work, as I said before, with both parents and other agencies such as Brook to look at how best we can provide education and advice in this area and I will give a commitment to do that.

Mr. M. Lundy:

One would expect that the Youth Inquiry Service that has been set up by the Youth Service would fulfil part of the role without narrowing it down to one particular set of issues that a young person might want to discuss, but opening it up to young people to discuss any issues which are affecting them in their development.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

But as a crossover between the curriculum and the pastoral side, was it a yes or no?

Would you be willing to consider such an approach?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I have already given a commitment.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Good.

Deputy M. Tadier:

To the Minister, you mentioned ... you seem to be implying that sex education needs to be a matter for the parents or certainly part of that is the parents' responsibility but it seems slightly arbitrary. I mean you would not say that science or biology or physics needs to be an area that parents take responsibility for. What is your view on that? Why is it different with sexual education?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

No, I think parents should take responsibility for their children, full stop. I am well aware that parents involve themselves in all areas of their children's education which is as it should be. I am sorry, but you cannot separate one area from another. The parents quite rightly have and want to have a part to play in their children's development and it is only right.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I do not disagree but what I am saying, it seems fairly arbitrary to single out one particular area of education saying: “This is the responsibility of the parents to do it.” You would not say, for example, I do not know, astronomy, we should not be dealing with that, that is for parents to deal with.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am sorry, I am not singling it out. Actually you singled it out in the question that you asked.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think education, regardless of what the topic is, is a partnership between the pupil, the parent and the educators, and the quality of education is enhanced, where there is a strong partnership and all the players take the responsibility seriously.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

But the point that Deputy Tadier is making, as I read it, Mr. Lundy, is that sex education is ... are you defining it as a different kind of educational activity which requires a different involvement from the parents?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I mean, sex education is delivered in schools according to a standard curriculum, the same as any other area of learning within the school, and there is no question of ... there is a balance of responsibility with any subject. If you are talking about early literacy, well, you would hope that parents were encouraging children to read books and talking to them about it. I think what we are saying is that for the development of

young people, the best type of partnership is one where parents, the schools and the pupils themselves are supporting themselves.

Deputy M. Tadier:

There is, of course, the consideration that an angst ridden teenager is not going to feel comfortable approaching their parents with the lessons of this nature so I think the responsibility does fall.

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is where the strength of the pastoral system comes into play. That is where you would hope to have strong pastoral networks in schools where these can be picked up and where youngsters can go to teachers, maybe not teachers, maybe other members of staff who they trust within the school. Maybe the Youth Service, Youth Inquiry Service, the importance is to back up the teaching with the pastoral support that will ... again it is about the universal and the targeted, is it not? You have the universal sex education curriculum and then you have your targeted support for individuals who may wish to discuss issues that concern them.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Thank you. We will move to Deputy Tadier with a real big one, so to speak.

Deputy M. Tadier:

What steps are being taken to review the overall provision of secondary education with regards to issues such as demographics and the non-fee paying and the fee

paying balance, which was touched on earlier by Deputy Le Hérissier, and the provision of 6th form education and the role of Highlands.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

As your chairman has already said, this is a huge topic and you have picked up all sorts of different parts in this one simple question. The one thing that I can inform the panel about is that the department is committed to developing a 10 year Strategic Plan for not only schools and colleges but also in other areas such as sport and culture, and this is aimed to be developed over the next year or 2 because as you can appreciate this is a large area. I am well aware and I have information available to me as a Minister that identifies changes and will update demographic projections and alterations, so that I can consider how best to manage those areas. I am, as part of my remit, one of 3 Ministers that sits on a Skills Executive that is required to consider the big picture and how we provide for our local community and young people and supported by a Skills Board whose chairman is Richard Plaster. We look at part of the information that is provided. It does not only necessarily identify student numbers but it also identifies a spread of where our students are, whether it is in fee paying or non-fee paying schools, which allows me obviously to consider future policy in that particular area. Equally it flows through because ... and as I say, hopefully now that we have our 4 year-old youngsters coming into the system it will give us a greater picture of what provision we need to make at what I call the far end which is the 6th form and the Highlands College area. So I think we have got the information available to make proper decisions. Some of them will not be easy, some of them will need to be done in open public forum, but we will have and we do aim to have a 10 year plan for the department that will map out the way ahead.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Maybe if we focus on the individual bits. I know that Deputy Le Hérissier was particularly concerned about the fee paying and non-fee paying dichotomy in Jersey and the way that there is perhaps a perception and I think it is more than that. There is a real issue about certain schools, the fee paying ones, and perhaps Hautlieu as well, effectively skimming off, creaming off the better students, for want of a better word, while the other schools are left to make do. Is that an aspect which the Minister is concerned with and would like to look into?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would be interested to know what you class as best students. I think we have got good information that identifies academic achievers. I think it is more difficult - I am sure my Chief Officer will agree - to identify those with the more practically based skills. There is definitely a challenge for us as a department which has been there for some time and has been considered and dealt with in certain ways; and it is how to meet the needs of those practically skilled individual and how to enhance their opportunities for career development and future job prospects.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think it is important to recall that the structure, particularly of secondary education in Jersey, is the way it is by virtue of the States decision to have it like that. So this is probably the most politicised aspect of education and has been the most politicised aspect of education in Jersey. It would be probably a shortcoming of any forward strategic document not to consider whether or not you would wish to retain that, and

the end of that, that again is the States will, but I think you would have to consider the impact particularly as you have falling demographics because the chances are, depending of course on the impact of any impending recession, the chances are that while you ... when your school rolls fall that they may fall in your non-fee paying sector and be retained in your fee paying sector thus affecting the balance again. So, I think in developing a strategy for the future the hope has been that it would be initiated by drawing together all the issues that are likely to face the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture over the coming years, and indeed the States over the coming years, and to take a view about any future direction.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

I take your point, Mr. Lundy, and we know the Hautlieu/Highlands debate I suppose was the last attempt, and a lot of people ended up very bruised as a result of that although we did get a new Hautlieu after that. Being bold, what would you say are the key fears you have? I mean, if the demographics, for example, do continue downwards, will that force you, for example, to close a States secondary school?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I doubt that you would consider the closure of a States secondary school because I am not sure you would have the capacity for the students. Certainly our predictions are now going to about 2020 and I do not see, with the way the numbers are predicted, to change over that period of time any opportunity to close a States secondary school. You may consider the way you use those schools. You might use them differently but that would be something for debate. The challenge, of course, in the primary phase is slightly different and

the funding mechanisms that support primary education are themselves quite a challenge. In the secondary phase the issue is not that ... as you know schools are funded on an A.W.P.U., age weighted pupil units, so the more students there are the more funding comes into the school the less students, the less funding. The difference between the scheme in Jersey and the scheme perhaps in the U.K. is that schools in the U.K. effectively have their own bank accounts and carry over their money, so if they anticipate fluctuations they can prepare for those fluctuations. Secondary schools in Jersey can adapt but there is a transition period over which it can be quite difficult, so I will give you an example which you probably are aware of. If you have a secondary school where at the end of August 150 students leave in year 11 and the next day 100 students arrive in year 10, you have lost 50 students, you still have the full cost of running the school, you still have all the teachers, but in terms of income you have just lost about £200,000-something. So you need to adapt then. That is the problem for secondaries. For primaries it is different because if your funding comes in on the basis of individual pupils, and I cannot remember exactly what it was, but it used to be around about 22 and a half pupils would pay for the cost of the teacher. If your class, through falling numbers, drops down to 15 the money does not come into pay for that teacher but you have still got to pay the cost, so you have got to find that funding in another way. There are 2 ways to look at this. There is an opportunity but there is also a challenge. If you think of it in falling pupil numbers then you think: "How do we get efficiency out of the system? Do we actually reduce the number of schools? Is that a closure?" We have done some things. We have amalgamated 2 primary schools into one. We have closed a form of

entry at Rouge Bouillon School and we closed a form of entry at Samares School which we subsequently had to reopen because the numbers changed again. That is one way to look at it. The other way to look at it is as an opportunity where you might say: “Okay, if you can sustain the level of funding in primary school education maybe you could consider reducing class sizes in schools that service your more disadvantaged areas.” So then you are hitting all the targets in terms of raising standards of literacy in terms of support. Your efficiencies come later because you are not having to put the same investment later on into maintaining and raising standards.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

The one point that must be recognised, and this is the difficulty I suppose of relying on statistical information, last year we had on this Island more births than deaths. So, we have to be aware of that area as well when we come to do our calculation. But, just picking up the last point that Mr. Lundy made, is that, as I say, the opportunity if we are to seek to improve on this early intervention that we spoke about earlier, there might be with, as I say, if they are reducing numbers, to influence and engage in that particular area in a much more proactive way than we have been in the past.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

What will you do, if numbers decline across the service, do you think we could be back to the solution that was looked at in the mid-1990s of a 6th form college, and rather than running relatively small 6th forms in all our schools at great, great cost you would rationalise this into one Island 6th form college? What is the Minister’s view? Will you be quite keen to look at that?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think that is one view that has been expressed.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier:

Is it your view though?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would not suggest it is my view. I think it is one of the options that may require consideration but at the moment I am keeping, I hope you would accept, an open mind in regard to how we best provide education for our young people because of the fact that we are embarking on the development of a 10 year Strategic Plan for Education, Sport and Culture. I am not here to tell you: “Well, we are going to go into a consolidation. We are going to look at development of the plan. By the way, I have got all the answers” because I have not. I think that as in the past the parents, general public, the States as a whole, need to fully consider what options there are available to them and make an informed choice.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

At the risk of asking the same question again, although in a different way. Do you think it is a viable option to be considered without committing to saying this is the way you are likely to go? Is it, in your view, worthy of in depth consideration?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am not sure. I have a personal view that there is another option that I would like to explore, and this is solely a personal view. This is not a departmental view at all. I ask you 2 questions, and perhaps as a panel you will disagree, but if you accept that the Hautlieu model is providing for those with academic ability it could be argued that what we need to look at or consider is utilising, if you like, the Hautlieu model to improve and hone the skills of those with more practical skills based. There could be opportunities to explore further that area, especially if we are to look at not only changes in the demographics but equally perhaps a greater emphasis being placed on developing and enhancing the skills of our local population.

Deputy M. Tadier:

That sounds like a very interesting idea; is there not a risk though because if we are saying that at the moment, and it is a moot point, but we are saying that Hautlieu effectively skims off academic students, the high performers, and then we have another system like Hautlieu which is more of a vocational college which looks to people who are vocationally elite, effectively, and it skims them off, then you are left with a school in the middle which has got people who are neither vocational nor academic, and the question is what do we do with those?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am not suggesting that I have all the answers for a start. I do not believe that we are skimming anybody off. I think it is our responsibility as a department to offer opportunities for individuals to, and I know it is a great word, maximise their potential. If it means that we need to provide certain facilities for them to do that and

we are able with the right resources to provide that opportunity, we need to look at it. Whether it is the right answer; I am sorry, I cannot tell you.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think it is important just to clarify the statement that has been made about skimming off. There is a transfer at 14, but there is also a transfer at 16. So, you know, it is not quite the way it sounds, the 11-16 schools as well as Hautlieu have very many bright children. The question is whether or not we provide a balanced programme of vocational education alongside a balanced programme of academic education and once one gets to the 6th form where they are across the schools, regardless of whether the model is a 6th form model or otherwise, there is a breadth of opportunity which is offered efficiently. Now, I think the collaboration between the 6th form providers is greater now than it has ever been and you have young people studying now across more than one institution. So, I think that that is a ... it is another model and it is a model that is working at the moment.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

But whatever we call it, Mr. Lundy, skimming off or the more euphemistic transfer ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

Selection.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Or selection. The point is, it is denuding these schools of students who could make a great contribution and you often hear the staff bemoaning this fact. If you were in an ideal world would you continue with that system?

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is a political question. I would not be prepared to answer that question. What I am prepared to say is that I can tell you the consequences of the system, I can tell you the likely impact on the 11-16 schools, and I can tell you the likely benefits for schools like Hautlieu. But whether or not it is a system that is desirable is a political decision.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Having analysed the various consequences, what conclusion did you reach about whether the system is indeed one to be recommended or not?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think it would be totally wrong to press Mr. Lundy on this because, as I have just explained to you, and I think we are trying to jump the gun here, and maybe it is going to become the standard answer like I am going to take the fifth amendment. But we are, and it is originally in our 2009 Business Plan, we are in the process of developing a 10 year Strategic Plan for the whole department, and obviously the questions that you quite rightly are asking and require answers to will be dealt with and debates and discussion will quite rightly be held to determine the future policy of this Island regarding the educational system. But to suggest that the particular system that we currently are providing is wrong or selective, I suggest it is just the opposite.

I think if you speak to certain parents, parents will fully support the idea that we provide young people with the ability to remain at the schools of their choice.

Deputy M. Tadier:

If I just come in quick; I do not want to pursue this but I do not think the fact that a selective is up for question, it is the fact of whether that selection process is the best way or not. But the point I want to make, is there a place in the Strategic Plan in the next 10 years or the International Baccalaureate to play a part in diversifying and giving people more options?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Absolutely. As you will probably be aware, it is already in the process of implementation at Hautlieu. The International Baccalaureate is not something that one just does overnight. In actual fact you have to go through a 2 year approval process in order to be able to deliver in your institution. You also need a 6th form of a particular size in order to be able to deliver it effectively, so collaborations, for example, between some of the other schools could enable them to deliver it and I think that some of the other management teams in other schools are looking at the potential for delivering it within their structures. But, certainly, what we do know this year is that universities are looking very, very favourably upon the International Baccalaureate as an indicator for potential for university education and they are saying that students with the I.B. (International Baccalaureate) have greater tenacity, fewer dropouts and in the words of the university, present as more rounded individuals. So there are some real opportunities there I think for Jersey to embrace and to perhaps do something that is not necessarily being done throughout the U.K.

and something that would have tremendous benefit for the students of the Island, primarily because the 2 major components of the International Baccalaureate are internationalism and the well-rounded individual.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

We will just have our final comments on this area.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Would the development of a 6th form college help push that along even quicker?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Well, the model is immaterial.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Just my final comment, Mr. Minister, it is not that we are trying to push you into declaring your hand, it is that I suppose it seems so much of the progress of “Jersey education” depends on how you deal with the history, with the historical baggage, with which you are faced. So, that is why it is quite important in trying to sort out what is simply tradition, we have got to keep this school for traditional purposes. What is based on empirical evidence? What has worked or has not worked? That is another question you have to ask. Then, as you say, issues like student and parental input. Obviously your input is very important because you will have views on how education should be delivered or not so delivered and, as we know, in some jurisdictions that could lead you to a comprehensive model almost as a political decision, not an empirical decision, as a political decision. You could say: “I want

everyone to be equal so you have all got to go to the same secondary school and we will sort you out, so to speak, when you arrive at that school.” That is why we are interested in your views.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would suggest to you I think you have just clearly mapped out an excellent scrutiny review.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

If you would like to employ me I will write the ...

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

The terms of reference included.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Anyway, let us carry on, and this is a spin-off in a way. With the likely decline in future pupil numbers school facilities need to be reviewed. The additional space created can encourage a possible change in direction to emphasise the school as the hub of the community for all to use. What is the Minister’s position on this possibility, what plans exist for the improved utilisation of school facilities and what plans are proposed to enhance the Youth Service estate?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

First of all, I certainly support the view that primary schools are and provide the heart of the community, and are a great starting point to develop a community. I think

regarding the utilisation of space, the department has already gone half the way along that route, there are sports facilities available. We do make schools facilities available out of hours for different uses. I have already had initial discussions and have asked to meet with the Comité de Connétables to discuss how we might be able to work more closely with them in providing or developing together facilities to meet the needs of both the community and education, sport and even culture. With regards our sports facilities, we are looking at again greater use together with Mr. de la Haye, the Director for Sport. With regard to the Youth Service, again, I am well aware that there are difficulties to do with the management of young people on the care and protection of young people within communal facilities, and that on a number of occasions community buildings and facilities have been closed down to enable youth clubs to operate. There are issues to do with shared facilities and so on. I think that interestingly enough I have just, again, had a very recent conversation with the Constable of St. Martin, because there are discussions and plans being considered about the redevelopment of St. Martin's School. With that I have asked him to think about what facilities might his community require so that as we look at the provision of facilities that there is perhaps, especially with a new build, enabling and designing a building to have multiple use. It is a line that collectively we need to work with, again, other partners to improve on. I mean it has got to be an aim for everybody to maximise the use of all of our property which includes all the estate that is now administered by our department because all the estate is now under Jersey Property Holdings as a responsibility.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I am just interested to learn, everyone is obviously under severe pressure with the economic situation; Mr. Swinson identified apparent caps that he felt could be made, certainly within ... well, a lot of areas but certainly the Youth Service. Are there any pressures upon you to consider within this making the school of the community to possibly close designated youth projects as a way of generating funds? Personally I think that would be a huge mistake.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would agree. I think there is a question, as you well know, I have promoted and will continue to promote the States using their resources in an efficient manner that adds value. It is very difficult and we are in a changing world, and I have been revisiting the suggestions made by the Comptroller and Auditor General regarding possible savings that the department may seek to achieve. The one thing that is very clear since the Comptroller and Auditor General carried out his review, we have ... our minds have been focused on young people, especially with the Williamson Report, and that has identified more resources to be focused and directed towards supporting our young people in that particular area, as one example. It is important. Another area that the Comptroller and Auditor General identified was reduction in the cost of the instrumental service. Again, wearing another hat, or number of hats, we want to encourage young people to participate in arts, in the broader range of culture. Grab the guitar, the drums, the young bands, and I am extremely encouraged by the efforts and the commitment that many volunteers have given to developing and enhancing the ability of these young people to participate in all sorts of different activities. So, absolutely we need to be mindful and, as a Minister, I will continue to encourage my department to look at how best we manage the financial resources available. I think I

said in answer to a question not so long ago, that I would equally be determined to raise the requirement or the issue and requirement for additional resources as and when I believed that they were required, and I hope I will bring to this position, as Minister, an open and honest approach that not only identifies the possible, I say, savings and opportunities that exist in improving our department, but equally areas where I believe required additional resources.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay, thank you. We have got to keep motoring, it is going to be, quite frankly, difficult to know if we are going to finish all this.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am quite happy if there are some areas where you would prefer us and we could provide a ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

That is a good point, Mr. Minister, as we come to them we might say that. But, at the same time, it is quite important to sort of have your thoughts laid out on the table, so to speak.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I mean I think I have conveyed the message to yourself as chairman that I am very open to continued dialogue with this panel and whether it is in this more formal setting or informally, I believe it is essentially that if we are to improve collectively the opportunity that exists under my remit we need to meet.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier:

I mean, some of the issues ... you have raised, for example, the implications of the Williamson Report. We have not got that on the questions but we might obviously have to come back to that. Carrying on with the questions; it is back - we are jumping a bit - but it is back to nurseries and Deputy Pitman.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

At a meeting with officers within the E.S.C. Department an issue with the limited number of nursery places and related appeal process was mentioned. How will the Minister improve the process?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think we just briefly touched on it, some of these things are still being developed as we speak, and we are encouraging obviously our private providers to work closely with us and the Jersey Child Care Trust to address this matter. Maybe my Chief Officer will add ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

In the past 50 per cent of places were free because they were at States nursery classes, and the other 50 per cent of cases in the private sector were charged for. So, the appeals process was usually around those people who did not get a nursery class place and did not get a free place. The context will change this year because hopefully with the partnership the majority of people will be able to access a funded place, but will still need to be an appeals process in case some people cannot get a funded place. The

criteria remains the same because the emphasis in the nursery classes is on supporting children of families, whether it might be special needs or disadvantaged, et cetera. So, that will remain the same because I do not think it is a particularly good idea to change too many of the elements of the programme in the first year of the new partnership. So, we will see how that develops. The appeals process will still exist and clearly the criteria for that appeals process are laid out.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Could you just clarify that the last stop appeal rests ultimately with yourself?

Mr. M. Lundy:

No, the Minister. Beyond the Minister obviously there is access to administrative board of appeal and the administrative board of appeal, while it can look at the processes cannot overturn the decision but can make a recommendation.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Just on that question; it is ... I mean obviously you have various appeal processes that operate in your department and these are, as we know, highly contentious issues within States departments. There is a feeling that our processes are not the same. For example, they are not consistent. They are not necessarily human rights compliant. Would it be the Minister's wish to carry out an audit of these processes just to make sure that there is consistency and if there is not to see if the process can, if necessary, be strengthened in all the various contentious decisions that you clearly have to take.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Absolutely. I think that it is a necessary part of everyday business that we should review existing policies, processes and procedures, and I am quite happy to aim to instigate a review of these processes to ensure that where possible we have the right checks and balances in place.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

There will be a more detailed question on suspensions, as you know, later so we will come to ... we can look at an example. Okay, we will move on to lifelong learning/cultural policy which is always all things to all men and women. We will move to Deputy Tadier.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I will keep it brief. Just in regard to the National Gallery, how high is it on the Minister's list of priorities and can you give us information about its place in the Business Plan and cost location, et cetera, if it does go ahead.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

At the moment I would personally say that it is not high on my priority list. I have, over the last couple of months, had a number of meetings with our cultural proviso organisations and I am well aware that there are some significant pressures on these organisations. Indeed, there are suggestions being made to me that certain of our cultural provisions might have to be limited, such as Maritime Museum and the access to it. Hampton is another area which might be a casualty of the lack of sufficient funds. There are other areas within the cultural estate that need to be dealt with. As such, I believe, that it would not be necessarily correct until we properly secure the

required funding for our existing cultural organisations that pursue a new initiative such as the National Gallery. I do believe that there are individuals that are committed to it and I am not dismissing it necessarily totally. However, as I say, certainly my initial thrust over the next year and more is to ensure that the sufficient resources are made available ... additional resources, shall I say, are made available to those organisations involved in cultural activities.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

A very quick one which may open a Pandora's Box, Mr. Minister, you may remember in the great Duck debate which took place there were some questions about what precise direction does the Minister have over the Jersey Heritage Trust and if, for example, as you have just mentioned, the Heritage Trust was to meet a bit of a funding crisis because, as you know, it provides a lot of its own funding but usually from revenue from people like tourists. Of course these are all becoming wobbly, so to speak. What do you see as your relationship to the Jersey Heritage Trust?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

As an enabler, I suppose. There are or is a service level agreement in place. I have not had proper time to examine it thoroughly but I am well aware and I have met the principals linked to the Heritage Trust, and other trusts I hasten to add. There is a good relationship between the department and ourselves. I think that the States collectively perhaps have chosen to ignore the needs and the resources that were linked to the cultural strategy that was approved a number of years ago. If I can just quickly briefly touch on the cultural strategy. It is my intention over the next year, 18 months, working with the partners, update the cultural strategy and perhaps look at a

more focused and phased approach, some of the recommendations and initiatives that were included in the overall strategy. Equally, I think there are some great opportunities that exist and synergies with the tourism and overall promotion of our Island, not just to outsiders but to locals alike. I want to explore that area too.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

It might seem to come slightly out of left field but within this area, where do you see the future of St. James, Senator, and is that a positive for your department or is it a negative? Are you happy with the situation there at the present?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

No, I am not. I think again it possibly was a decision made without much thought and perhaps in isolation, without any overall aims and objectives linked to it. Equally it did not recognise that, as I say, our existing cultural estate - and I am using the word "cultural estate" a lot - such as the Arts Centre, for argument's sake; the Opera House. We have got issues there that still are unresolved and should have been dealt with many years ago. In that life it seems strange that the States would have made a decision to add to those particular facilities yet another and find themselves in a situation where the funding is not sufficient to even finish the restoration. So, yes, there is a big discussion to happen. I will be working and have asked to meet with principals of Property Holdings to discuss our overall cultural estate, and that includes our heritage sites, I hasten to add, which are equally in need of financial resources to improve and renew, perhaps, the facilities that are provided at those places. So there is a ... sorry, I will stop there.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Obviously as a St. Helier No. 1 Deputy, probably a vested interest, but would you not agree to some degree that it is a bit of an eyesore that needs to be sorted out; scaffolding and ...?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think that there are, as I understand it, good reasons why unfortunately the scaffolding needs to remain at this present time. It needs to be dealt with. I hope that there is a new determination from Property Holdings and the States collectively to deal with what I call the hard to do issues, and our infrastructure costs and resources required is one of those areas.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

On this ... and we were going to go on to the cultural estate but you have covered some issues. One of the issues that came out in the great Duck debate, which never did take place, was that the Minister, as you may recall, said it was not his job to give directions to the Jersey Heritage Trust, so if they wanted to use their budget, for example, to renew the Duck service because of a crisis they could do that but then, of course, they had to deal with the consequence. In other words if they had spent the Duck money, the Duck money was meant to have been used elsewhere then you would have had to cut elsewhere. What is your relationship to the Jersey Arts Trust or the Jersey cultural community because the Arts Trust has had a lot of its funding withdrawn, like the Opera House, as you may recall, and to the Jersey Heritage Trust. Can you go in there and say: “Look, I do not want you to buy these Ducks because

basically it is going to sort of make the budget unstable or whatever.” Can you do that?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

No. I do not think it was ever the intention of the States let alone the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture to determine what these organisations do. I think that they have been given, if you like, a job of work to do, and they are required to be responsible and manage and arrange their operations accordingly. I am not going to start a conversation about Ducks because I think we have got far bigger topics to consider. But it is obviously clear that in their own view it was necessary for them to carry out and go into an arrangement regarding the access to Elizabeth Castle, which included the Ducks. That is quite properly part of their remit. I think, as I say, that what we need to do, and I am required to do, is to provide and enable those authorities and organisations that have been set up by the States to operate and provide the services that the public and the States require them to provide.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

With the property - sorry, then Mr. Lundy can come in to cover it all if he wishes - with the property estate, Mr. Minister, places like the Opera House and so forth, the property side of them is now handled by Property Management; is that correct?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

That is correct.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

But you still give grants obviously to the Opera House and the Arts Centre and so forth?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Now we are rowing into the murky waters.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Yes, and the Opera House, for example, is long argued that it has been ladled with this long arrangement which saw them really, again in balances, their budget and could you once and for all, I have heard the view put forward, could you once and for all deal with the loan and then we will really be on our way to be a self-financing theatre. How do you deal with that?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

How would I deal with it? It is what I am going to try and do. I cannot understand, and perhaps you, as a longer serving States Member than myself, why on earth the States chose to fund the Opera House in a totally different manner to all other capital projects and property throughout the States property portfolio. I do appreciate, and this is something that perhaps the States and the public forget, that we rely, especially within the cultural area, on private individuals contributing not only in supporting these organisations to continue their day to day activity but actually have contributed to the purchase and otherwise of buildings. Now, that does not happen in any other areas of my department, as I understand it. It certainly, to my knowledge, does not happen anywhere else throughout other States departments. I think it is something to be celebrated. However, the reality is the cultural organisations seem to be penalised

because of it. There is sort of almost an acceptance that because private individuals have contributed in the past that (1) that will continue and (2) they will solve all ills.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

We will move on to Highlands College and the Skills Executive. Deputy Pitman.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

In the Business Plan notes a new funding formula for Highlands College based on planned activities introduced; what is this funding formula based on? How will the role of the Skills Executive impact on how Highlands College is allocated the resources?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Can I pass the first part of that question over to my Chief Officer?

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

No. [Laughter]

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am not going to be able to give you a properly detailed answer, I am afraid.

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is an administrative issue, and basically what has happened is that rather than give Highlands College a lump sum of money and, in a sense, let them get on with their business, we have constructed a formula funding arrangement that takes kind of the

true cost of courses that are run there, including the overheads attached to the course. So, we have developed with our schools and have developed with Highlands College an arrangement which we called Professional Partnering where a single member of the department has a single conversation with either the school or the college about the business of the school or the college. Of course, through this conversation then we are able to talk about what the money going into the college is intended to buy. This gives the Skills Executive some considerable flexibility in trying to lever change over a period of time to meet the skill needs of the Island. So it has not translated into any major differences in the level of funding, but there is a lot more clarity about what is being funded within Highlands College and, of course, it can lead to conversations about whether or not that funding is being used to good effect, and whether or not it could be used to better effect either in the college or, in fact, elsewhere.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

On this issue of Skills Executive, can we ... and I have to tread carefully with Highlands College. Sorry about that. Can we get it clear then, the Skills Executive can direct Highlands College to run certain courses within its budget; is that correct?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

No, the Skills Executive are there to give a high level overview direction to all providers or all people involved in developing individual skills, personal skills. The Skills Board is there to work more closely with those organisations to identify areas where improvements can be made and then bring forward proposals that can then be considered at the high level by the Skills Executive and, in turn, create a better dialogue and improve dialogue with the various providers. It is, in effect, creating a

far better, we hope, and more co-ordinated approach to meeting the skills required for individuals to access jobs.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Perhaps a practical example might help illustrate the difference. The conversation with the college, and indeed the schools, around their development plan, it will be about: “What are you doing to meet Government initiatives, priorities? What are you doing to meet departmental priorities and what are you doing to meet your own priorities?” So we would expect any of our institutions to be covering those 3 bases. If you looked at the Strategic Plan and then you looked at the department’s Business Plan, you will see that there is a desire to enhance 14-16 vocational education. So, now the money that would go into Highlands College would be specifically for that area, so we can have a discussion about what that will look like within the context of that resource, and that resource then would not be available to be used for anything else. So, it is a way to move forward strategic aims, Government strategic aims, departments’ strategic aims alongside the college’s own aims.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Will you be squeezing out what some people may be disparagingly call the “nice to have” as opposed to the “need to have”?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is important that the department listens to those who are the experts in further education. But it is also important that the Skills Executive are able to recommend at a higher level what they believe the Island’s priorities should be, and of course what

translates from that is that discussion, that single conversation with the college about how perhaps the college might, over time, change, adjust its activity, in order to meet those needs. It is not a question of going in and micromanaging the college. That is not what this is about. It is about enhanced governance and enhanced accountability.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

One final point; it is good to recognise that the balance, the foundation, to agree courses, if that is the right word, have basically, in part, been developed and come out of dialogue with the Skills Executive and the Skills Board and other partners.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

We will now move on to another issue that has been with us and will be with us for a long time, higher education fees. Deputy Tadier.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Thank you. I think Deputy Le Hérissier is probably slightly too polite. If we can all try and keep things concise, I know these are very big issues though, so it is difficult to do so; it is not a criticism in any way. We are going to be talking about higher education fees, and I will just quote the Minister from his speech: “Next year university fees are due to be negotiated and I will work with the islands of Guernsey and the Isle of Man, in order to achieve the best deal possible for those wanting to access higher education.” On the basis of that, can the Minister provide an update on possible increases in U.K. university fees? What is the current forecast? On the back of that, if you include an answer about top-up fees which is also an area of concern for Jersey.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

First of all, the U.K. Government is expected to announce its spending intentions in higher education for 2009/2010 in March this year. We have arranged to meet with the U.K., “we” meaning Guernsey, Isle of Man and myself, to meet following that announcement to determine how best we move forward. In the meantime, officers from Guernsey, Jersey and Isle of Man, have already met on Friday, 30th January to look and start considering about how best to approach with the aim to renegotiate the fees for the next 3 years. I am told that the University U.K. Group have advised its members that in instances where tuition fees for overseas students are lower than the negotiated Island rate, institutions should charge the lower rate. Obviously that will be a challenge for us to ensure that the very least happens. We have also been led to believe that perhaps this particular government, the U.K. Government, is not minded to push for higher fees as much as the previous government, however we are all well aware that we are in extremely difficult times, which are very fluid. It is something that we need to be mindful about as we approach these negotiations.

Deputy M. Tadier:

If I can come back on that. Personally I am sceptical as to how much influence Jersey and the other offshore islands have in negotiating with the U.K. It could be a similar argument of a passport stamp in the passport where we are just stuck with it and they will use that as particular leverage and say: “If you do not succumb to our demands for whatever we will charge you what you want.” But that notwithstanding, if the top-up fees and the overall fees are becoming prohibitively high would the department

consider looking to universities perhaps in mainland Europe as an alternative to the U.K. and what would be the implications?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

First of all, the department already helps and supports individuals obtaining further education elsewhere, apart from the U.K. I am well aware in New Zealand ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

We have students in New Zealand and Australia.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Australia and in Europe, I believe.

Deputy M. Tadier:

It is quite far away then.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Yes, but it is down to value and in some respects the choice of the student and where the particular course meets their particular requirement. That is the first point. The second part of the picture is that with regards to negotiations of fees, I accept that it might be considered that it is a limited success, however there are some main issues to be dealt with here. We are being treated differently to other overseas territories and there is a case to be answered. Also there is the issue of how, in particular, U.K. residents who come and live and work on our Island for periods of time how they are treated, because I have had comments from U.K. residents who are currently residing

on this Island that they fall into the definition of a U.K. resident and indeed they are not. Their passport clearly says that they are U.K. born and bred and raised and this is an area that I am, and I know has been raised already with the relevant U.K. department. So there is a need for dialogue. How far that dialogue will take us, time will tell, but I think there is a commitment not only on my behalf and the department's behalf but generally the States as a whole to ensure that we continue to provide higher education and make it accessible to all individuals, and I have raised the concern about increases in university fees to the Council of Ministers, because just to throw in a figure, an increase of £1,000 in university fees per annum equates to a cost of £1.4 million, that is linked to the amount of students that we currently have at university at the moment.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think Mr. Lundy wanted to come in.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The context has changed somewhat this week. As the Minister has said, £1,000 translates into about £1.4 million which will be picked up by the partnership of the parent, the student and the States; the student through the student loan scheme. Currently the negotiation with U.K. Universities means that our students are repaying half of the top-up fee and we have a particular deal with U.K. Universities. This is tackling the point you made about clout. The intention of the U.K. Government was to develop a market place for higher education and give the universities the opportunity to set their own levels of top-up fees, assuming that there would be different levels. They all went for the maximum fee because obviously no university

would want to be seen as inferior to another. So if the top-up fees went to £8,000, for example, we would have some real challenges in meeting that but the Minister has put in a request for additional funds. The trouble is we do not know when this is likely to happen. The situation in the U.K. is there is some confusion about it at the moment. Now that there is a recession, with this current government there is a feeling that rather than give universities the opportunity to increase the fees further they will ask them to do more for less because the impact on the Government, which is running around about £60 billion of the student loan scheme at cost, because they are lending out the money at less than they are borrowing it, but any increase in top-up fees would lead to an increase in government spending in that respect, and of course they have not even got to the point where they have tried to recoup these loans. So, there is a possibility that the Government will be saying: “No, there is not going to be any hike in higher education fees, you are going to have to deliver more for less.” That puts us in a reasonably strong position when we start to negotiate with U.K. Universities and, in particular, some universities. The university where we send most of our students is Exeter and the chair of Exeter is going to become the chair of U.K. Universities so I think there is an opportunity there for some discussion with someone who understands our needs.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Taking on board everything you said, but at the election it certainly came up, concerns from middle income families who might have 2 offspring at university. What sort of comfort can you offer them, if any, of concerns towards the future because that is clearly quite a daunting issue for many, and I know you would agree that we do not want to see a situation where young people are not going to university.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

The comfort; I suppose 2 things. One, and I know maybe it is small comfort, but due to an amendment that was agreed in the budget, the parents are not penalised of the removal of their allowance if their child earns any money after graduation last year. That can be a benefit of up to £1,600. That is the first thing. Equally, at the same time, the Treasury Minister gave a commitment to work with the Minister of Education, Sport and Culture to look at how and what support is provided to people with ... parents with young people at university and that is an ongoing dialogue that will take place within the next 8, 9 months.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

So it has not happened yet, has it?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Sorry?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

That discussion has not happened yet?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

No. I mean, in fairness it was ... I know I might be thought of as fast moving but there are certain areas that I have still to cover, and that is one of them.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Just add on to this; it is at the end but we may as well do it now. Are you happy, Mr. Minister, with dropout rates? You publicised them in a States the other day from higher education.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

No, I do not think anyone can be happy with a dropout rate. I want everybody to succeed and complete whatever task they set themselves. I think the challenge for us is to possibly understand what the issues are or the issues behind the figures.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

What are the issues?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Exactly. **[Laughter]** We have yet to understand that. It could be ... I mean I am just guessing, but one could be financial. I hope it is not. It could be that job opportunities have arisen in the individual's lives that have encouraged them to not complete their further education. But it is an area that we will be trying to better understand. There are certain systems in place that ... sorry, the other area that people will drop out is through health and medical reasons, and I do not want to make light of that. Where that is the case there is obviously no financial penalty whatsoever. In other cases, where there is a genuine decision made to leave higher education or university to go travelling, or various other issues such as that, then there is a financial penalty, but that is a minor issue. What we are more interested in, is ensuring that the young people that commit to this higher education ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

This piece of work is ongoing.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Can we get a report on this at some point?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Yes, Careers Jersey and the head of Careers has done ... I do not know what the timeline is on this but certainly he is on the case as far as this is concerned.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay, we can bring that up later. Thank you. Sorry, we are going to have to motor a little bit. We might have to convene another meeting ...

Deputy M. Tadier:

I have another meeting as well.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

If people's posteriors are surviving in the public gallery, so to speak. Very quickly, the Youth Forum.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Indeed, very quickly. What will the Minister be doing to bring about a Youth Forum that is inclusive, engaging young people from poorer backgrounds and those that do not currently access formal hall(?) and formal education?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

This is a challenge. I think with your involvement in the Youth Service you will also recognise that people make grand statements which are far more difficult to achieve. I need to work with the schools, with the Youth Service, with other organisations to encourage initially young people to believe that they are an important part of our society and that they have a voice. The difficulty, and it is not only linked to young people but to engaging with the public at large, it is how to maintain that conversation. I know certain attempts have been made in the past. Some reasonably successfully, some less so. But I have a genuine desire to improve the dialogue. I have been fortunate to speak to young people in the Parish that I live and they have got a lot to offer. However, we have got to get it to break through the barrier of us and them.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Might it be of value to link that to the political education?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Yes, do that now, Trevor.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

So with regard to political education and lowering the voting age, what has been the experience of the department debate and how does the Minister propose to enhance and widen the programme of political/civic education, in 3 minutes?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

My experience is very limited. However, I think that our citizenship curriculum is an excellent initiative. The involvement of Scrutiny in that process and Ministers has been useful. I think greater dialogue needs to happen between the young people and States Members, their opportunities do exist. I am told that certain Deputies will go and talk at different times and different schools; I encourage that. It is a fine line that we are required to walk and I think the election process flagged that up. We do not want to promote particular individuals or groups and so on and so forth, but at the same time we must improve, I think, on the ability to identify that an election is going on. It is a challenge. It is a relatively new experience for us and the department to have 16 year-olds involved in the election process.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Can I push you on that? Because certainly when I worked in the U.K. it would be quite common practice to have Liberals, Democrats, Conservatives, Labour, all come in and talk to young people. Okay, we have not got a party system but do you not accept that is a way that we need to develop forward?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is quite common practice in Jersey. The fact of the matter is that politicians do get invited into schools to talk about issues.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

All of them?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Perhaps not all of them. It tends to be on a school by school basis. But, I mean, you asked about political education, which is essentially somewhat different from the election and electioneering, and the responsibility of schools is around political education with a view to the vote being introduced at 16 years; we built on the existing curriculum and some of the things that happened were a new citizenship curriculum policy was developed to outline, this is an important aspect. A guidance document provided for schools, which is now used to plan the teaching. A resource pack was developed to support the delivery of the curriculum, particularly for those teachers who are teaching in Jersey who have no experience of Jersey. They have just come to Jersey, that is an important aspect of it. That is on the Education website. The resources that are used specifically illustrate the structure of the States, detail the Members and their roles, and in addition, 2 very important learning opportunities were created and have been used for the last 2 years, one is for year 5 pupils who have an active learning experience in the States and then all year 10 pupils in the non-fee paying sector have an active learning experience which gives them an understanding of the role Scrutiny and the workings of government. So they undertake ... they participate in a Scrutiny exercise and these are quite potent active learning opportunities.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

I will have to bring this to a fairly quick end, but Deputy Pitman.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Without meaning to be at all facetious, how does any of that translate to what we saw happen at the election where clearly there were more of us on the platform than young people so there certainly seemed to be something that was not connecting?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is a democracy.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Whether that is education or ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

In a democracy people can exercise the right to attend a husting or not to attend a husting. I think the difficulty for schools, and of course as director I was put into this position, the difficulty for schools in saying: "Well, okay, let us have a husting in the school while all the youngsters are there during the school day" means that effectively politicians would be addressing a captive audience. I think you would obviously want to consider whether that was appropriate. That is not something that happens with any other section of the voting population. So it is about education and allowing people to exercise their democratic right.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Certainly. But I think we would all expect young people to be fully made aware that they could attend if they wished and clearly that was not there.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I have some anecdotal evidence that that is the case. I do not have wide spread evidence but we will make sure that we take steps to enhance that communication.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I take the point, but I think there are certainly ways that if you did not want people to attend the meeting you could time it in such a way that you would not get a good attendance, and also if you do not publicise it you will also not get a good attendance. I know that is a certain issue with the hustings in question that there were other things going on. There were basketball matches happening. People, if they have to choose between one or the other, they should not necessarily have to choose and I think that you could have it in school time with an opt-out option, so if you do not want to come to it on conscientious grounds you can go and do some study elsewhere.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Can I briefly respond?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Very briefly so that I can speak further.

Mr. M. Lundy:

We would be happy to discuss the detail and the arrangements around curriculum organisation with you, but probably this is not the appropriate forum to do it.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Can I suggest again, it would be quite useful, in the light of our 2 colleagues who I know have got a great interest; there possibly has been a political shift in Jersey. I know these sometimes are very, very hard to notice in our particular situation. It would be very useful if we could have a report from your department on what your assessment was of our first round of dealing with the post-16 phenomena. That could open up a dialogue either with this panel and/or with Members.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Sorry, just ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Certain rules were applied. Obviously you had evidence from your point of view as to whether or not the structure you put in place, the rules you put in place worked. Some people thought they were too rigid. Other people thought ...

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

The election process?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Yes. Other people thought they were just right, for example. You have Scrutiny which has got an excellent interactive kind of thing, which is political where people ... there is a structure where you discuss issues, so what I would like to see is what is your view of what happened and let us start a discussion.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Can I suggest a better way forward because I do not believe in looking back? I believe in looking forward.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

We have got to learn.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Absolutely, but we all have experiences of that. I would suggest that probably a more constructive approach would be - and I will discuss this with my department - to identify people within our department, people like yourselves, and other interested people to get together as a group, flag up the concerns that were raised and then sit down and work out how best collectively we can deal with it. I think that would be a much more useful process and I think we could get some real things moving quite quickly.

Mr. M. Lundy:

As a prelude to that, I know that Scrutiny Members are interested in fact finding visits to schools. To be honest I think that the schools are the people who are closest to the pupils throughout ... were closest to the pupils throughout the election period. That would be the opportunity for you to get the school's perspective on it. Quite clearly, I am happy to get the views of head teachers as to how the impact was at the school but I would not wish anyone to think that I had sanitised those views. So you would have the opportunity to discuss them directly with the schools and challenge us on any issues that you feel ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier:

Okay, I think we will go away and look at that. That looks a good way forward. What there is left on the list, there is the whole issue of sport and leisure and that good old chestnut of Fort Regent where the Minister did make some early comments, but we are not going to be able to deal with that now. There is the issue of financial pressures, which obviously is again always with us. We were going to look at ... Deputy Tadier wanted to raise an issue on language provision and of course there was just going to be some general questions. So we have to go away and decide how we are going to handle these. Whether we can do some by written format or not, or whether we need to re-invite you. Sorry, the one I need to add is the Williamson Report, which the Minister raised and we do need to look at that, and the whole issue of suspensions which has come up in the States recently as people know. Again, there are issues there from the phenomena itself, the appeals process and all these sorts of issues. So we will decide how to handle those. I would like to thank you both and your team very much for attending. I would like to thank my members and I would like to thank ... I know some members of the public do not like this somewhat rigid straightjacket way in which we operate but this, at the moment ...

Male Speaker:

Am I allowed just to express a few words?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier:

Yes, express a few words.

Male Speaker:

It is all about public participation, students are noticeably absent from these proceedings. You have been talking virtually 2 and half hours about young people, who are virtually excluded from ... Previously I asked at a previous Scrutiny meeting that I attended, I asked about public participation, there should be some time available for the public that do last the course to ask some questions. Also I note that the panel and your victims and possibly the press, I am not sure of the press, have copies of these notes which are pre-prepared ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

We can give those out.

Male Speaker:

Whether those could not be made available to the public as well.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

I mean, basically what I said ... I think the other option, and we will go away and think about that, thank you very much for that, Mike. The other option is to revert to what Scrutiny has done from time to time is to hold these general meetings. We did that with Care of the Elderly, for example, a few months ago where you bring the main actors from Jersey, if you happen to have your adviser around, you bring them as well. You give written presentations, hopefully to stimulate discussion. It has been done by one or 2 other panels. You bring them along and you basically have an open ended discussion now. Sometimes you just get the people who have got very, very strong views and you do not get the generality of the public there, but we do record those meetings and they are meant to be, in inverted commas, a somewhat

more relaxed version of this meeting where people run with what they have to say. But the purpose of this meeting, as I said at the very beginning, was to basically get the thinking, the views, the state of policy, when we could, of the Minister and the department to enable the panel to sort of get these things fixed.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Making some time for the public, is that something that could be taken to the Chairmen's Committee?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Yes, we could bring that to the Chairmen's Committee. Because I do realise 2 hours on fairly hard chairs can be difficult, but we do not want another 2 hours.

Male Speaker:

That is possibly not the most painful part.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

No, but we will try and sort of improve the oratory as we move along. Thank you all very much indeed.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would just like to say, I would like to obviously thank the panel and members of the public for being here. I have conveyed to you already, but this is hopefully the start of an ongoing dialogue between yourselves and our department. We are all aiming for the same goals so we look forward to continuing with you.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Thank you very much. End of meeting.