

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR TREASURY AND RESOURCES
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 23rd FEBRUARY 2016**

Question

Will the Minister update members on what progress has been made in determining the scope and structure of the 'health charge' proposed in the Medium Term Financial Plan?

How many meetings have taken place with the relevant Ministers to discuss the new charge and when can the Assembly expect proposals to go out to consultation?

To what extent, if any, will the charge involve changes to the funding of General Practitioner and dental services and the re-introduction of prescription charges?

Answer

As the Deputy is aware MTFP2 includes proposed additional income of £15m for 2018 and £35m for 2019 under the description "proposed sustainable funding mechanism for health". Consistent with the statements made in the 2016 Budget the Minister's position is that, provided States income continues to meet the forecasts outlined in MTFP2, the amount to be raised through the sustainable funding mechanism in 2018/19 will be reduced by any additional income raised through the annual Budget process.

As noted in the MTFP2 document, an officer working group has been established to provide advice to Ministers on the scope and structure of the sustainable funding mechanism. High level presentations regarding the options and related issues have been made to the Council of Ministers in May 2015 and recently at a Council of Ministers/Chief Officers workshop.

Although no decisions have been made, it should be noted that the Council of Ministers' final proposals are unlikely to consist of a single income raising measure, but rather, consistent with the approach adopted in most jurisdictions across the globe, the sustainable funding mechanism is likely to consist of a package of measures which deliver the required income but also help to drive the correct behaviours in the consumption of health services. The Council of Ministers are committed to outlining firm plans for the health charge in the MTFP2 addition (scheduled to be lodged in June 2016).

The health charge proposed in the MTFP relates to services provided by Health and Social Services and therefore don't extend to the funding of General Practitioner and primary dental care services and the re-introduction of prescription charges.