

2.15 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding a fundamental review of Education, Sport and Culture Department spending:

Would the Minister explain why it is not possible to carry out the recently announced fundamental review of the department's spending using existing States' resources?

Senator M.E. Vibert (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):

Many things, of course, are possible but the purpose of this review will be to consider the appropriateness of Jersey's current investment in Education. As such it will be important to draw comparisons with other jurisdictions and to consider the relevance and implications of these comparisons in setting future levels of spending on education in Jersey. This work, in my opinion, is best carried out independently as it is vital the review is regarded as unbiased and independent. However, I anticipate that it may be co-ordinated and monitored by a steering group made up of representatives from appropriate States' departments.

2.15.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Minister not acknowledge that with the use of appropriate advisors, for example, that bodies such as a Scrutiny Panel or bodies such as a Comptroller and Auditor General could well make a vital contribution?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

I agree, they may make a vital contribution, Sir, and the Comptroller and Auditor General, at my invitation, is already looking at some of our processes, but I repeat that I believe that such a fundamental review needs to be independent so it can be regarded as totally unbiased.

2.15.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Minister not acknowledge that there is a great danger that this exercise is basically an exercise in self-justification of current and future spending levels?

Senator M.E. Vibert:

Yes, Sir, exactly why I want it to be independent.