



Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Government Plan 2024-2027

Witness: The Minister for Children and Education

Tuesday, 31st October 2023

Panel:

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Chair)

Connétable M. Labey of Grouville

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée of St. Helier South

Witnesses:

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North, The Minister for Children and Education

Connétable R.P. Vibert of St. Peter, Assistant Minister for Children and Education

Mr. R. Sainsbury, Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills

Mr. J. Williams, Programme Director for Education Reform

Ms. A. Homer, Head of Finance Business Partnering

[12:32]

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central (Chair):

Welcome to this public hearing. Today is 31st October 2023. I would like to draw everyone's attention to the following. This hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. So beginning with introductions, I am Deputy Catherine Curtis. I am the Chair of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

Connétable M. Labey of Grouville:

My name is Connétable Mark Labey. I am the Vice-Chair of the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy B.B. de S.DV.M Porée of St. Helier South:

I am Deputy Porée and I am a member of this panel.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Deputy Inna Gardiner, the Minister for Children and Education.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Richard Vibert, Assistant Minister for Children and Education.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Rob Sainsbury, Chief Officer for the Department of C.Y.P.E.S. (Children, Young People, Education and Skills).

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

Anne Homer, Head of Finance Business Partnering for Children, Young People, Education and Skills.

Programme Director, Education Reform:

Jonathan Williams, Programme Director for Education Reform.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Thank you, everyone. So first set of questions is about the value for money savings. Right, so the 2024 C.Y.P.E.S. value for money target is £2.45 million, which is more than the 2023 target of £688,000. What factors have you considered to determine whether the 2024 target in value for money savings is achievable?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Thank you, Chair, for your question. We will do our best to achieve the target, because if we are looking at our overall budget the £2.451 million represents 1 per cent, 1.19 per cent, of our budget, and this is why we need to do our utmost to look at, for example, reducing agency and recruiting permanent. With agency staff, as we all know, there is higher expense. We also need to look through our contracts and our procurement. We also need to put some improvements in the process and the system now. From my direction of travel and it is clear to all officers I am not ready to reduce any front line staff, so it will not be a reduction in any services and front line staff and it will be increased because we would invest more in inclusion. We will invest more in C.A.M.H.S. (Child and

Adolescent Mental Health Service) and I am happy to talk about that later. So this is the target. The officers now are working to present to me a more detailed breakdown but I am not going to sign to anything that will damage and can affect in a negative way the delivery of services.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. In my next question I was going to ask more about the things you have mentioned already, the reduction in agency staff, looking at process and systems, so could you give us a little bit more detail on those at the moment and how might that work? An example.

The Minister for Children and Education:

For example, as we have done with education this year and we have put lots of effort in permanent recruitment, like last year in primary schools we had 30 vacancies. Now we have only one and there is already an application there, so we will use less supply teachers than we needed to use last year. So it is not accommodation, it is not relocation. There are lots of things that can be saved. Again, the full numbers I must share with you because the numbers were worked out with the team. Also we have procurement and better contracts. I already know about at least one contract that has been negotiated and it has gone down from £200 to £150 for the same services for the same scope, so we need to go back to the market with our contractors and to sharpen the pencil and see what they are doing for what price and probably open the market to different suppliers. We always know that if we are thinking about the maintenance of schools, the cleaning contracts of schools, we know that services can be delivered in a different way and there is competition. If I can say this, and thank you for showing me, the children's social worker agency will save between 20 per cent to 30 per cent of the cost.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Is that by getting permanent staff rather than agency?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Do you think that is achievable?

The Minister for Children and Education:

We are already in a better place. We have gone from 45 permanent staff to hopefully by the end of the year we will have 65 permanent staff and we have options in place. We are putting a programme in place because, and maybe Rob can share more details, officers are working creating a special H.R. (human resources) team for C.Y.P.E.S. This is when we have dedicated people and not going

through the loops to interview. We will do our best, but again I would like to do these savings and I can see how it can be saved. As I mentioned previously, it is only 1 per cent of our budget. It sounds a lot, but our budget is a big budget.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes, so our plan will be that we have dedicated H.R. recruitment support quite similar to what we did with teaching assistants, which worked quite well, and building on the C.A.M.H.S. position as well. We are hoping that will take us beyond the 65 per cent currently of staff being substantive. We would obviously like to get to a much higher position than that. For every additional staff that we recruit we reduce the individual cost by up to 30 per cent on the agency fee, so it makes a big difference on our efficiency and value for money.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, and better overall. Minister, you referred to the approximate just over 1 per cent for the value for money savings of the revenue. My next question was how was this target figure agreed upon? I think I saw it was similar for health services in Jersey.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It was a general drive from the Treasurer to save £10 million and depends on the percentage within the budget that we have been encouraged to look into what we can do and contribute and we need to play our part.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. My next question I think you have answered already, but you may want to give a bit more information. Please could you confirm whether any savings will be sought from C.Y.P.E.S. staff costs expenditure?

The Minister for Children and Education:

No.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I know you mentioned front line staff, but possibly I missed that.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, it is not about staffing because we are very ... again, we might have people within the department that will start to do different work because our delivery of our services is changing. C.Y.P.E.S. 2 years ago probably had 4 group directors. Now we have 2 group directors and we will

continue with 2 group directors but we are not going to, because we now have the lower management level, next step, so we have more practical delivery than more strategic delivery.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, so that is a definite no for the staff costs. The next question then was: please could you provide a breakdown on the savings, if it is not staff costs? So is it just those things that you have already mentioned?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

About the number of agency staff? So that is it really?

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, that is not. There is agency staff, there is procurement, which you have better ... also integrated pathways. So we started to work ... and it can cost up to a million. When we work with the family and the child now, they need to go to different services and they have a social worker and they have another youth worker and they have others, so there are lots of people around. So what we would like to do is when we have a child with our social services they will have point of contact and this will streamline the communication and bring the people together around the child.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

There is also an element of where we have the highest need and complexity in care those care path packages are inevitably very high and are very costly. As some of our services around preventative focus, the intensive youth support service, building on the work of the early help teams, that should also then start to assist, so that we are catching and supporting complex situations earlier that are not going straight into the very end, much more negative, outcome for the family, which is often much higher expenditure.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So that is really the best way to do it, is it not? But I suppose sometimes it can take a long time as well.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Absolutely.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The net revenue expenditure of C.Y.P.E.S. has grown in recent years. How will the value for money savings target affect areas that have not seen any revenue growth funding support? For example, inclusion funding and fee-paying schools, digital education and that sort of thing?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think there is still ... so you have seen our gross and it is important really to explain that our gross is combined. We have £18,100,000 from the last year Government Plan and we have extra added, £4.7 million this year, so our revenue gross in total is £22.8 million. We just need to work and to prioritise. For example, it was a separate business case for the youth workers, so what are our priorities? What is important? We will fund this through one of the items in the gross that we received, £2.7 million for general, whatever we decide to do are priorities will go to the youth workers because the youth workers are extremely important and we need to keep them. We still have £7 million for the inclusion. About the fee-paying schools, because I am not involved in fee-paying schools, as I am conflicted.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. I have been working with Jonathan looking at fee-paying schools and the 2024 budget. One thing is that we are doing some Q.A. (quality assurance) at the moment on those figures about inclusion as to whether they are correct or not. On the face of it, it does look like there is relatively low funding for inclusion, but we want to look into that in more detail. Any growth in the budget I think we would like to see that inclusion is prioritised within that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So that would be including the fee-paying schools?

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. But we are still at a point where we have not reached agreement on the exact funding formula, so I do not want to say anything that suddenly goes out there in the media and we get parents contacting us. We are actively working on it. In fact, had it not been for this meeting we would have met today. We are very actively looking at fee-paying schools, the funding formula, inclusion, all those topics.

[12:45]

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay so the value for money savings plan is not going to impact on these particular things?

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

No. I mean, when you talk about value for money and you cannot say that it is a guaranteed thing, but the number of children in care is falling. So that may have an impact on savings in future years, but there is no guarantee of that, but it is pleasing to see that numbers are falling.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think that early investment and early interventions was really focused this year, and we have already started to see a difference. It is a small difference but we see the difference. The latest conversation with the police was that we had 20 per cent less youth offenders this year, which is already giving some indication that we have less children in care.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Do you think that the services like the Youth Service make a big difference there?

The Minister for Children and Education:

They are.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

They do.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Also external services such as Brighter Futures with helping parents and so on?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think Brighter Futures is doing really important work and we had a meeting with them and we started to work more, because there are things such as the early intervention and wraparound care for the whole family can be commissioned. They started to work with families under children protection so it is more complex and we are developing our commissioning with them on the outcome base, because they are definitely delivering the services and support in families. It is early stages.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

I can give a personal example of working with the Youth Service, in that I have arranged ... because of various issues that we had 2 years ago, 18 months ago, I asked them if we could have more outreach work if I funded them, and that has had a significant impact on antisocial behaviour, graffiti, bringing in those children who would not normally be part of a youth club or the Youth Service. Even if they do not join they have someone on the outside they can talk to. It has had a significant and very positive impact. I will not say what the amount is, but for relatively little outlay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

This the reason why even though it is a regional business case was, okay, we have £2.7 million, but what are our priorities where we can see the most impact and £185,000 for 5 half post funding for the youth workers will make a huge difference. It is also where we train our staff, because we have 5 staff in the parish working part-time and they can be full-time so they have enough time for progression to training, to connect and to work with children. Also, value for money we are looking at our core budget. So it is not that we have £22 million revenue gross and it is revenue gross and the whole budget. It is really to look into the contracts and to look into our ways of working.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

To see what can be improved. Okay. I just have a little bit more about this, which is about Guernsey. The Government Plan states that the Government will seek to work jointly with Guernsey where possible. What inter-Island work could you see for C.Y.P.E.S. in future?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I have met my counterparts with Guernsey twice, with the Isle of Man as well twice. I met her for a second time. We started to discuss our options, for example, for joint post-16 education. There are some courses that we can open in Jersey and they can join and they will open in Guernsey. We are working in a complementary way between ourselves. Now we have safeguarding pan-Island and the chair of the Safeguarding Board is between 2 Islands and the Isle of Man have asked maybe to join. There are things that we can develop together, for example, when we start to look into maybe loans and we are looking at extra support across Island, across all 3 Crown dependencies. It is easy to consider then just us. There are options, and hopefully we will have a meeting around skills. The Isle of Man Minister for Education is very interested that we develop a charter together and we might have a meeting in December here where they will come. We started to look together about a children's rights approach, children's voice and also around early years we had a conversation, the earlier progression, the earlier support. So there is more and more communication because we realise once we work together we can develop a more joint approach and it will be helpful.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

You mentioned the cross-Island loans. Did you mean ...?

The Minister for Children and Education:

You know there is a big policy development on how we can support extra, so we have a £60 million grant. The grants continue as the grants, but as you mentioned and you raised with me several times, sometimes this £60 million is not enough but there are other options.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So they have access to more if they need?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, great. Do you think any of the ideas could create savings or are they still in long-term planning?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It might create savings through the 16-plus. I think this is the first ... if we manage to get joint courses from September, because we all know our needs in skills and we know that it is difficult for particular professions or particular specialisation to find enough people to justify the course, but if we manage to do online and join between us, we can make it cheaper and quicker.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, okay. The ministerial plans have some new priorities around value for money and reference reducing duplication and ensuring future affordability of services. Have you got any more information to add from what you have already said around this?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think I can give you some steps that we are planning. For example, review and reduce use of overtime in agency invariable pay contingent labour cost, the next step we need to identify those are as impacted to track and to really track our spending. We are also going to review all our off-Island placements.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Even though it is important to mention that most of our off-Island placements, they are in foster care than in the position, as we are developing local therapeutic home, we will have our own therapeutic home within a year; it might contribute as well.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The intensive foster carers, you were trying to get some intensive foster carers as well, were you not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. I think what one has to say that while you look at some of these things the actual outcome for the child is what is most important.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Not necessarily the spend on that, yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, okay, definitely. Now I just have a few questions about grants. Many departments pay out grants or subsidy payments and C.Y.P.E.S. has a budget of £10.8 million for this in 2024. How does C.Y.P.E.S. estimate these figures for the Government Plan?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Okay. Currently there is some legacy and the legacy that the grants were given and this is grants that are known for ... yes, there are some new grants, there are grants that stop you, you have seen the table. In my ministerial plan I have put for my ministerial plan 2024 why it was important, developing best practice models for partnership engagement with the third sector. Because personally I have found that we do follow the Public Finances Manual, so it is all according to the rules and the chips are down but what I found out that there is no ... I think some organisations need to receive more, some organisations we need to understand what the service is and they need to deliver. It is really placed to have review the commission in the system and this is what we are going to do. This is what I put in my ministerial plan and I know that officers started to do some work with C.L.S. (Customer and Local Services), I think, to develop this. The commissioning framework is intended to be processed and guided through the methodology. What their officers are going to do through 2024, they are going to review that a new framework will be implemented from 2025 because I found some legacy things with question marks and I feel there are new charities that are very active, very positive. They can deliver but we do not have ... so it is much more difficult to incorporate in advance because you have this legacy.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, so that new framework will be something that still follows the Public Finances Manual.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, yes, yes, it will be ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

But that will be the framework for C.Y.P.E.S. then.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think at the end of the day we would need to develop a framework that will be connected with C.L.S. and H.C.S. (Health and Community Services) because we have some charities that they receive some money from our commissioning team and some funds from the health commissioning team and some funds from the Celeste commissioning team. I felt it is really not helpful for the charities and it is also not helpful if you work with the organisation, you need to have one person of contact and to get through everything and it just says ... we found like a different commissioning team and they all follow the Public Finances Manual. I do not have any doubts there is some governance issues. It is more about how you view the whole picture and how you make sure that any services that you need to commission, you commission, you have assessment, you have feedback and you have more. There are also things, yesterday we had a conversation with ... yes, we had a meeting.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

About the third sector really, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It was about the third sector. I said, okay, there are grants, bigger grants but it does not matter if you receive a grant of £300 or you receive a grant of £3,000, you need to sign 8 to 9 pages, the same legal document, which I do not believe it is necessary.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right, yes, okay.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Sadly, it is one size does not fit all, not sadly but an attempt to make one document that it does not really work.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

No. You have outlined how the review could improve the way it is done.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

But my next question was: how is certainty provided to organisations that receive grants? How do they know that next year they might get some help? Is there any ...?

The Minister for Children and Education:

The organisation that received a previous grant, they would receive. There is a grant agreement and they know where they are standing with the grant agreement. If the grant agreement is coming to the end, there is a conversation. We, for example, know that with schools we need to renew our grant agreement in, I think, summer or September 2024, I do not remember.

Programme Director, Education Reform:

Yes, so we will do it for September of next year.

The Minister for Children and Education:

For September next year.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

The conversations started already, so that will be certainty how this grant would work because it is a new grant agreement, yes.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes. I was just going to add that where you have some grant arrangements with charitable providers, we are talking to them about additional work and additional activity. We are talking in potential commissioning contracts and potential grants. I think what the charities are really saying is they need to have a long-term plan and they need to understand where there is long-term certainty so they can recruit substantively and that is what we want to work with them around. It is very active with Brighter Futures, it is very active within N.S.P.C.C. (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) because they are looking at doing additional work as well.

[13:00]

That is where we might have adjustment to the grants, which might be more than commissioned contracts, and we would be working through all of that with them.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right. Because I think you had said that we would get a list of commissioned services, as well as the information we have already got.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, we will share.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes, we can do that.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

With the certainty that they get, do they know a few years in advance, a few years ahead if the requirements do not change massively that they might still have that grant? They have some certainty for several years?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is usually 3 years with the partners in service delivery, like schools. We have the same amount with Family Nursing; they have school nurses, so it is ongoing. This is what I say, that if we need to increase because the services that they started to deliver they increased, we do have a conversation. What I found out that probably we need to increase than decrease, so they know what they are getting but we have now started to develop the framework that it will be given funds according to the volume of the services that they are delivering for us.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Then I just had a question about how does C.Y.P.E.S. assess the services it provides grants to. Is there a mechanism to capture the value of what they have done?

The Minister for Children and Education:

There is different ... depends on the commissioning service and it depends on the organisation and it depends on the charity. There is assessment going, now they need to submit their report but, again, once you are reviewing the whole framework, I think the whole process needs to be looked at from the beginning to the end because I think there are some gaps and they need to be ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. Yes, and then I was just going to ask about things like service agreements and does any of this need reviewing as well, the way it is done, do you think?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think at the moment that you would have the new framework, unless there is a new agreement, like grants agreement with the schools will be, then probably the framework will be finished, you do have service-level agreements.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. The panel notes the largest proportion of grants awarded to by C.Y.P.E.S. includes grants to support the operation at Beaulieu and De La Salle College in the last few years. Could you provide more information about the operational support provided through the payment of these grants?

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

The basis of the grants to the schools is on a formula basis. It has been agreed with them and is developed over years and it is flexed by the number of pupils in each year, so that is how the money works. The grant agreements themselves have lots of schedules with performance assessment frameworks. Some are just conditions, they have to agree to be able to audit, they have to agree to use the curriculum and have educational inspections, those kinds of things. Those are big grant agreements in which the basis of the award and the conditions, what we want to see back, are very well spelt out over, I think, 30 pages, a number of schedules. The commissioning team and the Standards Inspection Advisory Service work with them to ensure that they are producing that. They have to give us their stats, for example, they have to tell us how many children they have got in each year, those sorts of things. It is quite a well-developed framework and it is monitored at least internally with the inspection piece on the same sort of frequency as all the Government schools.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is quite a lot of checking ...

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

I am not saying they cannot be better, all of those working on them. It is always an improvement journey but it starts with quite a thorough base.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. There is quite a lot of checking afterwards and so on but basically it is something that has been there for some years and is to do with the number of pupils.

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

The funding is. The terms of the service agreement specifies what money we will give them but it also specifies what we want back.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, all right.

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

Back from them and both those things are followed up with them.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thanks, okay. I think now it is questions from Deputy Porée.

Deputy B. Porée:

Thank you. I am going to ask a few questions with regards to C.Y.P.E.S.'s income. Of the £500,000 income target for the hire of the C.Y.P.E.S. facility in 2024, please can you provide more information about how this target is determined?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think that the target is determined mainly on known income that we know of over the years, like you estimate what was income before and what will be income through the year. Again, we always need to look at the income by expenditure, so it is not that the income it is the full profit. For example, if we are looking at the canteen income it is an expenditure and I am not sure if it is operating in the profit or it is operating and you have subsidy, even though that looks like a big income, £220,000. The profit will be zero, it depends how many children will take up the ... happy to do that. It is really important to look through the expenditure, yes. But this is general, the income, I remember that you ... and not remember we have had a conversation at the previous public hearing and, as I promised my officers currently working and reviewing and update hiring policy facilities for the C.Y.P.E.S. estate because it is a review of what they are reviewing currently. It is the cost of hiring of the facilities, for example, different rooms, external spaces, different types of facilities because it can be a classroom, it can be a sports hall, it can be outside the space for events. Also, I asked to identify possible groups that will be exempt from the payments because, as you raised, there are some ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Some great charities.

The Minister for Children and Education:

... great charities but, again, if they are not charging a fee and they are not making a profit, they might receive it for free. But if they are putting the full event then they are charging fees, well, there is a conversation to be had. We need to develop the system. What will be the process for the hiring facilities? Obviously make sure that it is meeting all our safeguarding requirements because it is always on the school ground, health and safety and governance in place. Officers will be presenting the possible options, whatever the review going, in the next 2 or 3 weeks, hopefully to me. It depends

how it is all going but it is imminent. I expect that I can complete any options in early 2024. I will be happy also to have a direction of travel to have a briefing before and finalise it, as we had done previously.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, thank you. How does the level of rental income affect, if at all, the grants provided by C.Y.P.E.S., so the income from rental of the buildings, like you have mentioned just before, the facilities that are used multipurpose in buildings? Is that income taken into consideration?

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

No.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, I do not think it is connected currently.

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

No, because if an organisation needs to have a place to operate from, they are free to operate from wherever they wish. We give them a grant and they are then free to choose whether they operate from one of our facilities or from somebody else's.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, so you are saying you provide that grant but if the organisation or the charity creates some income from rental, has it not got an effect on the grant you provide or not at all?

The Minister for Children and Education:

We do not have a connection.

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

Not usually, no, no.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, okay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Maybe it is something that once our review needs to be also thought but currently there is no connection between the grant and ...

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, that is good. Because I suppose in a way for these charities and organisations to rent their spaces because they probably do need the extra income, so we were just trying to see how that balances against their original grant. Okay, thank you for that. The panel notes that the annual accounts of organisations that receive in excess of £75,000 in grant funding from the States of Jersey must be published as a report to the States Assembly but these have not been published since 2019. Do you know if all of the organisations that have received C.Y.P.E.S. grant in excess of £75,000 have provided annual reports since 2019?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I know there are some. Okay, they need to provide it to the Treasurer, not to me, so not to me as Minister for Children and Education. I know that they must do it and I know there are some delays. I have personally had a conversation and I hope that it will be presented.

Deputy B. Porée:

That is the question I was going to have for you after, so if not, how are C.Y.P.E.S.'s grants in excess of £75,000 tracked or monitored? You are saying at the moment you are not so sure but is it something you could find out and provide to the panel?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. As I say, I would like to see accounts and I was very clear that I personally and I urge to see the accounts. It was a very clear request.

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

Part of the grant management process is the grant manager calls for accounts for all organisations, regardless of the amounts ... well, not completely regardless, over £5,000. The report that you are referring to is the publication by the Greffe so that the world can see them. There are 2 things, there is the management of the grant and the Public Finances Manual requires that the grant manager asks for the accounts, so we do that. Whether or not they are then put out there for the whole of the public, they have got to be those bigger ones and the Treasurer is in control of that big report. We do ask for accounts. Some of the agreements have timeframes on them of within 6 months of their yearend; some do not have timeframes on them. Usually if there is a delay for any reason, the crunch point comes when the grant period is renewed. We would not normally renew a grant if any of the conditions of the grant had not been met, including the provision of accounts. We have never been in a position where we have not been able to renew a grant to date. It is part of the routine of the management team, our commissioning service, that do that; they call the accounts in but some do take longer than others to be returned to us. The big ones, the publication piece is a Treasury piece but the grant management piece is our job on behalf of the Minister.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Maybe some questions for the Treasurer.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, thank you. Okay, so can you please confirm whether the £75,000 requirement includes any benefits in kind?

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

No. I am pretty sure that this is in the Public Finances Manual. The point is whether the grant sum is £75,000 and I do not think it is specified. It is a good question though.

Deputy B. Porée:

You can come back to us. Would you do that so to be sure, please?

Head of Finance Business Partnering:

I will run that by the Law Officers.

Deputy B. Porée:

Yes, that would be great, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, that is a good question, yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

Please come back to us on that one. Thank you very much. Okay, Minister, one of the new additions to your ministerial plans this year is developing a strategy to offer affordable and also targeted free nursery provision for children aged from 9 months. Please could you advise where these priorities are reflected within the Government Plan?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Within the Government Plan, okay. First of all, yesterday we have published our response to the petition. I am sure that you are aware there was a petition. We have discussed yesterday with the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister and with their colleagues that we must create what are called the task force to concentrate into it. Specifically we will look at early years' childcare and family support because it is very complex. Last Friday I met my counterparts from the British-Irish Council, that the whole discussion with us was around early years. What is clear is we have different approaches. For example, Jersey provides 30 hours universal 3 to 4.

[13:15]

When we looked in other parts of the U.K. (United Kingdom) it is not universal now and it is not 30 hours, so it is somewhere at 15. What I have allocated as a first tranche, we had targeted 2 to 3 support already, we have 93, 95 families currently through Jersey and we allocated an extra £450,000 for the targeted 2 to 3 support within the nurseries.

Programme Director, Education Reform:

Yes, so the Minister is right to reflect that we already have some funding in 2023, which has supported additional families. Within the Government Plan 2024 proposals there is a further roughly £500,000 to build on that amount. Then, Minister, do you want to refer to the events that we have to build the policy for early years or would you like me to talk to that?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Programme Director, Education Reform:

That clarifies where we have funding either confirmed for 2023, proposed for 2024. The concurrent piece of work is on developing a series of policy options to present to the Minister in the first to second quarter of next year to align with the Government Plan process. That very much will look at a whole host of activities, starting with, as you would understand, ensuring the continued improvement of the quality of early education and childcare in early years, but also look at the configuration of the markets. So what is the demand in terms of that early years provision? What are the different options in terms of the supply? What are the different funding options the Minister might want to consider? How do those relate to what is being done in other nations and elsewhere in the world? We are looking at transferrable relevant best practice and that is being undertaken with a lot of stakeholders over 3 or 4 what we are calling roundtable events in November and then in January, where the output will be policy recommendations to the Minister.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Also, I cannot find the numbers but we have increased the tax threshold for the allowance for the refund, which is we get an extra ...

Programme Director, Education Reform:

Yes, so childcare tax relief increase in limits is one of the many things contained in the Government Plan.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, that is very good. Thank you. I suppose you just took us through the next steps of the work you are planning to do.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Steps, yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

That was going to be my question to you, so thank you for that and ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

This is why I put affordable and targeted because we cannot take universal for everyone, so it will be targeted. Even the U.K. they start with 15 hours for 38 weeks and it is means tested.

Deputy B. Porée:

Yes, that is great because I am just going to ask you a few targeted questions about that. With reference to offering targeted free nurse provision, what will be the target beneficiaries for this particular scheme? If you will say will be how ...

Programme Director, Education Reform:

It is exactly the right question and that is the question that we are asking through the roundtable events. We published some research, refreshed a little while ago, that talked about different cohorts of young children benefitting from different approaches. I am using language that was contained in the evidence report. Perhaps families from an impoverished background would benefit from a universal approach and it enables a much better uptake. Families with young children who have additional needs benefit from a much more targeted approach. We are looking at a number of questions around those different cohorts of young children: what the demand is, how we should look after them, what the supply is, how we could do that, and that is very much part of the question sets that we are setting stakeholders in that roundtable event when those events ...

Deputy B. Porée:

Means tested in terms of financial ...

Programme Director, Education Reform:

I think it would be wise at this stage to say all options are on the table but we need to develop those into specific policy recommendations for the Minister.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It will be policy development but currently we are looking at children with special needs and they do need support from birth, from early age, and the earlier we will give support the better. This is why it is targeted. We are looking at the group specifically from deprivation, from the family that is living in more difficult conditions. We cannot offer immediately universal for everyone, and to see how we can also support working parents as well and to allow people to go back to work if they wish.

Deputy B. Porée:

Also, can you confirm if there will be any special additional support available for parents with triplets, for instance? Is that in your plan at all or would you consider that?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think it is good to consider.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, several children, yes, but more than one child.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It was not on my radar. Because it is going to be a roundtable open discussion, it can be raised, yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

Yes. Just to think logically, if you have a family with financial needs and happen to have 3 children, one child changes anyone's life, never mind 3 at one time.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. Not triplet sets.

Deputy B. Porée:

Obviously that will be a different allocation of support if that is a consideration of yours or not. Okay, thank you. What about in terms of timescale for delivering this priority? What have you got in mind at the moment, if anything?

The Minister for Children and Education:

First of all, we are to increase 2 to 3 year-old targeted offer already, free targeted offer for 38 weeks. We started with 20 families and then it went down to 19 families and we put in an extra £450,000 investments that it would increase £50,000 this year, allocated specialist to increase the 2 to 3 targeted support. I assume that through this development we can see ... the first step it is really to extend 2 to 3 because the earlier they start and slowly introduce. This is also that other nations are

going to slowly introduce other younger children who come. Where was the conversation? I think the sentence that I think it was made from Friday, it was a presentation from Early Years Association in the U.K. in London. She is from England, she said: "From one side we are really excited that we get these 15 hours free, from the other side we are really, really worried. Are we ready with the workforce and quality spaces?" It needs to deliver together at this space.

Deputy B. Porée:

Need to work together, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

You are giving us money but we are not sure if we are ready to deliver what you would like that we deliver. This is how it needs to be introduced. It was a lot about recruitment into the early years sector. It was a lot about the quality. It was a lot about the general arrangements. Once we will finalise the amount of money it is not everything, we need to make sure that we are delivering, the provision is in place.

Deputy B. Porée:

Provision of the setting and delivery, it is really important because we do know nurseries are really struggling at the moment.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, the moment that we increase to 30, I think lots of nursery spaces struggle to ...

Deputy B. Porée:

Overworked, understaffed. Sometimes I think to kind of cut their hours in order to provide the quality service, rather than the other way round. Okay, thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I just ask a little bit more about that timescale? If there is an intention to extend this offer as the universal offer for 2 to 3 year-olds, what is the timescale for that?

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, again, we are not talking about the universal, we are talking about affordable and targeted.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

In the ministerial plan, they are developing a strategy to offer affordable and also targeted free nursery provision for children aged from 9 months.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is only targeted, it is not universal for any age group at all, apart from we have already got for 3 year-olds.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is not universal. Yes, currently it is not universal. We have universal 3 to 4.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

There is no intention to extend the universal.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It will come as a policy development maybe but currently I can commit only for ... I have for this year 25, 26. I cannot see that we will be able to offer universal from zero to 3.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Or from 2 to 3 either.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think if you are thinking how the funds and how the provision and what we need to create as a system in place, I cannot see that we will manage and nobody receive a universal. I cannot see and when we discussed it is so many things needs to come in place before we will be able to consider universal.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is planned for the targeted offer then.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

To extend it, can you give a bit more detail on timescale? I know you have said there is going to be roundtable open discussions, been a lot of reports ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, no, that is where we are extending it, all right, we tripled it through this year and we are going to offer double during the next year for 2 to 3. What is coming out from the roundtable, this is why we are building the task force. I think that once we will sit and discuss how we can do it I can give you a bit more detail. In 2024 currently it is to extend 2 to 3 targeted and to create the policy options to make sure that we will continue to provide targeted and affordable support for earlier.

Deputy B. Porée:

Basically you have responded to the needs.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

Then if the need comes down the line it is something you would probably be willing to look at it. Is that what you are telling us?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Because this is why we have this roundtable, to work with the providers because we need to train the workforce. We need to make sure that we have spaces in place. It will be increased the moment that you provide more and it is free of charge; we have a high uptake.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, thank you. One of the additions of your ministerial plans this year references: "A review of family support and parenting groups, as well as support for young carers, to provide consistency across the whole Island." Please could you advise where and if this priority is reflected in the Government Plan?

The Minister for Children and Education:

First of all, let us start with our Children and Families Hub team that really developed over the year and will continue to develop. This is part of our social reform programme and this is our investment in the gross from last year that we have around sufficiency strategy and social reform. Also, we have Triple P programme, Triple P, the 6 weeks programme for parents and carers of children from

18 months to 18 years to support parents and carers with their children's behaviour and learn about positive parenting and how this can be applied to their families. We continue to invest in this programme. There is New Forest Parenting 6-weeks programme for parents and carers for children between 3 and 11 with A.D.H.D. (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder) who want to improve their knowledge of A.D.H.D. and how it affects their child and learn tips and ideas to help support their child. Also, we support EarlyBird and EarlyBird Plus. It is a 10-week National Autistic Society programme for parents and carers who have preschool children or child between 4 and 9 with a diagnosis of autism. There are several more programmes that we are investing. There is lots about support and training and knowledge and education for the parents and carers.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, thank you. Will a review of support offered include charities and organisations, that they are presently supported by Government grants?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Absolutely and this is going back to our previous conversations and meetings that I am having with the charity sector, how we are supporting them in a more fair way for the services they deliver, the outcome-based grants and commissioning.

Deputy B. Porée:

Thank you, Minister.

The Connétable of Grouville:

My turn.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Minister, the next group of questions sits with capital projects currently. We note one of the priorities in your ministerial plan is that: "The C.Y.P.E.S. estate will be updated to reflect disability accessibility, safeguarding requirements and the capacity requirements of the C.Y.P.E.S. services." Please can you outline some of the plans to address these aspects, please?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Thank you for the question. Absolutely. First of all, we have like 3 groups of the project. One is the major capital projects where you know that we need to build 2 schools in St. Helier. We need to build a secondary school for Mont à l'Abbé and these are the big projects and we know that

everything that you mentioned for the safeguard of disability access, of its inclusion, because these schools will be built with this in mind from the first place. It is much easier to build and plan than to make arrangements. We did invest even this year and we will continue to invest to disability access to schools where there is a problem with the disability access. When we look at Le Rocquier, for example, sports hall, even though we are maybe not building a completely new sport but now it is a feasibility study and planning and design to make sure that they have updated, upgraded sports facility which will include disability access, and they needed the safeguarding procedures.

[13:30]

We are also investing in the Youth Centre at Le Squez. It is one of the bigger projects and the project plans are already drawn and it is through the feasibility, which will be a new community hub and a space for young people and also space for speech and language therapy. It is big site that we will make sure it is all connected around the schools. But if you would like more details, for example, we have a specific number in our expenditure specifically for disability access, so it is there.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Cool. Where is this reflected in the Government Plan?

The Minister for Children and Education:

If you look through the capitals you have, at C.Y.P.E.S we have £700,000. We have school improvements, it is £5,765,000. We do the Youth Service. You also have the funds. You have this under different heads of expenditure. Like I say, thinking about one of the projects when we need to reconfigure entrance to the school, together with the new servery for the hot meals, I know that it feels like it is 2 different projects and maybe it is 2 different lines of expenditure but at the end of the day we are creating this space that will incorporate everything and funds coming together.

The Connétable of Grouville:

The ministerial plans reference a roadmap for the redevelopment of schools in town. How has this priority developed during this last year?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think we have really progressed. We have clear plans, a clear way forward for the ... we call it Gas Place but I think we have a conversation we call it east of town or the centre of St. Helier.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Confusing, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

We need to finalise the name maybe.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Just the one name, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

One name because I think Central St. Helier would be the easiest name because it is the centre of St. Helier, my personal view, but we can change it; it will be central.

The Connétable of Grouville:

With the recent outage gas is not going to be involved in any names, are they?

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, no, no. I think the Central St. Helier would be the right way. The plans for best ... we did have some feasibility studies in place. I hope we will finalise the transfer of the land and we are preparing public engagement, including architects' competition in the spring term. This will progress and I hope we will start to build in mid-2025 if no public inquiries or public inquiries is ... we all know that these types of projects they can take longer but at least we are following the best possible route. About the Rouge Bouillon, I wish I would progress a bit more because we are still with this Fire Service ... not Fire Service but the plans are in place. I think that Future Places group should meet shortly and a decision should be made. I am not sure if, Rob, you have later start dates because I left it with the Chief Officers of Home Affairs and C.Y.P.E.S. to ...

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

We are looking at options but our plan is this side of Christmas. At the Future Places meeting we were able to bring something to the Ministers that meet both departments' requirements because we need this solution. Kate Briden and I have been working together on this and Andy Scate, Chief Officer for I. and E. (Infrastructure and Environment) is the S.R.O. (Senior Responsible Officer) who chairs our sub-working groups supporting the Ministers.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That would be really good I think.

Deputy B. Porée:

Can you tell us anything about it, give us a flavour?

The Connétable of Grouville:

It is just that my next question is all about ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Otherwise I will start to bus children to St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter and I think that the St. Helier children will really benefit from the fields.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, go to St. Peter.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I am saying this but I am very close because I believe that our town schools are oversubscribed. We have real complexity and we know there is a growing population in town. When we look at the classes at the country parishes there is a space. I know this may be not environmentally friendly to bus but if I ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, it is awful that children living just near a school cannot go there because there is no space and it is ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

Exactly, so it is not right but at least if it will be ... I hope we will start to build and we will progress but there is always this option to access to win spaces for them.

The Connétable of Grouville:

That is really the crux of my next question was all about timescale and some sort of idea of that sort of timescale, so we can have an idea when we go and visit these places. But the other thing is just to say: is there a full roadmap or a timescale or will this be published in phases?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It will be published in phases because the roadmap for the Central St. Helier school, I think that we are looking into early 2027 if it is all going right. Because it takes 2 years physically to build and the Rouge Bouillon, it depends how many changes, what needs to be built first and what needs to be moved and this is where we are. But we have put funds into the maintenance. The Rouge Bouillon School received lots of maintenance funds, so at least it has been fixed and they do have some space. A teacher told me: "I wish we had a new school but if we know that in another 3 or 4 years we have a school, we are okay for the next 3 or 4 years."

The Connétable of Grouville:

Keep it going.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

No pressure.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No pressure now.

The Connétable of Grouville:

In the quarterly public hearing on 28th September you advised us that work on any building development, for Rouge Bouillon School for example, would likely start in 2026. However, there is no funding in the new school and educational development expenditure until that year. Please could you explain why no work will be undertaken in 2024 and 2025?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Because there is a funding for feasibility study planning application and for building. There is a separate kind of report or head of expenditure that have funds for every preparation of work, not the building work.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I would like to see that in the Government Plan then.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Okay, if somebody can help me to find it, yes.

Programme Director, Education Reform:

Page 21.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Page 21.

Programme Director, Education Reform:

The table, I will find it.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Okay, we will find it, yes, sure.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thanks.

The Connétable of Grouville:

The next question: in a recent correspondence the panel was advised that Mont à l'Abbé Secondary School and the Le Squez Youth Centre and Community Hub had moved from the new school educational development to major projects.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Has Rouge Bouillon also been redesignated as a major project?

The Minister for Children and Education:

This is what is important, okay. First of all, we did find it, it is page 63; you have separate feasibility funds.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

In this year we have £1,706,000 for the feasibility. When it is moved to the major project when we start building and delivering, so the feasibility passed and the plans were drawn and design had been done and the consultation was done and we are going towards the planning then. Le Squez and Mont à l'Abbé, with just to them, I am not sure if you have seen before the public hearing that the Minister for Infrastructure put the report that the Mont à l'Abbé field would be purchased for the Mont à l'Abbé Secondary School to be built. We are moving both of these projects. They are moving into physical delivery.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Physical, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

When we have projects that they are major but they are still not in the delivery, they are going under this page 63 feasibility and consultation and ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Excellent. Do you think that the Rouge Bouillon School will be the first of the town schools to be redeveloped?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think Central St. Helier would likely be the first.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We are going to have to change that name again, are we not?

Deputy B. Porée:

It looks like it is going to be Central St. Helier.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Central.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I am open but it feels right, just in the central.

Deputy B. Porée:

Whatever you choose, we just want one name ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

What is written there, East St. Helier, yes, east. I am sure it is central.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, I think central, yes, yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think it is central, yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

If you were a postman it would not be.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I am not a postman.

The Connétable of Grouville:

No, good enough. The next question: the panel notes that the construction of a new east of St. Helier primary school and an extension to Plat Douet Road School is in the feasibility stage.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

What impact does the construction timeframes and priorities status of these school projects have on the feasibility considerations?

The Minister for Children and Education:

For me it is number one for the feasibility now.

The Connétable of Grouville:

That is a good answer. Please can you provide a breakdown of the funding split between the construction of a new east of St. Helier primary school and the extension of Plat Douet Road School?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I am happy to speak in private because it was very clear from the previous engagement that commercial sensitivity ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Right, okay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

We do not want to start to break down.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Absolutely not.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Because we need to go to the market, test the market, get fair and the application at ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay, fair enough. Moving on, please can you explain why the Mont à l'Abbé Secondary School and the Le Squez Youth Club and Centre projects changed from new school and educational developments to major projects? We are a little bit concerned about this major projects title and where that sits.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Can you explain what has happened then?

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I think it is a programme reporting element. The Chief Executive has been really clear that our plans have got to be deliverable and so the C.P.M.O. (Corporate Portfolio Management Office) that supports all of our project delivery is going through all the categorisations for major, strategic and we are working through that with them at this moment in time.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I just get confused.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Right.

The Minister for Children and Education:

For me I mean I hope we will start to build Mont à l'Abbé and Le Squez as quick as possible. They are mine to progress and we will develop the feasibility for central of St. Helier.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I am sure that encompasses my next question, so thank you very much. Yes, something that resonates with me and my fellow Connétable on the panel, Marcus Troy ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Who cannot be here today unfortunately.

The Connétable of Grouville:

... who cannot be here today sadly, please can you advise when the feasibility study of the current Le Rocquier School Sports Centre building commenced? I believe there has been 2 or 3 various aberrations of this feasibility study already and we were just anxious to know when that is all going to be commenced.

The Minister for Children and Education:

My understanding that it is now they are working on it. They started now. When we understood there is no support from anywhere to build the £70 million new sports centre in that area, we did have the money and we are working on 3G pitch for Le Rocquier School and extension and refurbishment of the lower ... so it is happening.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

But it is in progress.

The Connétable of Grouville:

The panel notes that the feasibility work will be completed in 2024, at which time its inclusion in the capital plan will be reviewed. Please can you advise on the timescales for the completion of the feasibility work in 2024?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I would need to get back to you with an update. I have my capitals update in a week's time, so I will ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Because both the Connétables from out east are very anxious about the lack of sporting facilities accessible to the public in the east of the Island and it is something we are very keen on.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

There is an imbalance there and there is so much more, I think.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Absolutely.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Please can you provide an overview of any previous feasibility work undertaken in relation to the Le Rocquier Sports Centre, the Further Education campus, V.C.P. (Victoria College Preparatory School) and the Digital Centre of Excellence?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Okay, let us start from Le Rocquier. I received a presentation. It was not a deep feasibility study, it was like options that were presented, which I liked the idea but it was not deliverable for the envelope because the price tag was £70 million on that. It would be great but it was not only in my portfolio, as you can imagine, it was much bigger as a sport facility for the community; it is under a different remit. This is why they have gone back to very specific what we can do for C.Y.P.E.S. from the C.Y.P.E.S. budget. What was the next?

The Connétable of Grouville:

The Further Education campus.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Further Education campus. Further Education campus, we are doing several things. First of all, we are now at the stage ... I paused the full feasibility of this for one reason ... for a couple of reasons but the important thing, we are not talking about the buildings before we are understanding how the future further education would look like.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes.

The Minister for Children and Education:

We are working between Skills Jersey, Jersey Employment Group, Economy Department, together as a working group, which working around the skills parameter, what future skills will be required and how it will be delivered. It is more about understanding the need before we are saying: "This is our need." This is what we would need to next enter, yes, and after we will go how it can be delivered. In the meantime, like Digital Academy building that was used previously only by Digital Jersey and for the different courses, some of the courses from Highlands moved to Digital Academy because it is I.T. (information technology) courses and it would be right to deliver in the Digital Academy. We are trying to see how we are optimising the support in this state in the meantime than as we are developing the vision and after we will go to the building.

[13:45]

The Connétable of Grouville:

Sure.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

We will also obviously maintain health and safety, building maintenance during the period, so we have identified in our plans.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you. V.C.P., Minister?

The Minister for Children and Education:

V.C.P., there is ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

Sorry, for the record that is Victoria College Preparatory School. Okay, sorry.

The Minister for Children and Education:

With V.C.P. there are 2 different options. One we need to support the current estate, where they are to make sure that these old Port-a-cabins, which are not suitable and I know that officers are working with V.C.P. to be replaced for something that is more 21st century. At the same time there is a policy review because we have received reports and we talked about different types of education and we know that V.C.P. is key stage 1, is co-education, co-ed, and the question was raised: do we need to build a new V.C.P. for key stage 2 boys only or there is a scope to have co-ed for all the way through from reception to Year 11? We are not touching ... there is a J.C.G. (Jersey College for Girls) and Vic College but without V.C.P. it would be ... and it is conversation ongoing between my officers, board of governance, head teachers. It would be obviously who would decide to explore this option. It will be full public consultation because the public needs to have a say anyway to do this or that, where I need to go and to bring ... yes, because the V.C.P. cannot be revealed where it is. We need to go back to the States. Though there is a policy, options need to be explored before we are thinking about because the current building as a building can receive a school review. They have not gone through our school review framework and the feedback about the building itself was very positive. There were problems with the Port-a-cabins and we are looking at this. It is something that it is there but we are not progressing to build a V.C.P. imminently.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Not imminently.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Can I ask a question?

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, of course.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

You might have been going to ask anyway. I would like a timescale for when you think this review might be completed on the policy options.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Policy option, it is work between the board of governance, head teachers and the officers. I ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

If you do not know ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

They need to come back. I kind of left it if they would like to progress and how.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay.

The Connétable of Grouville:

With my next 2 questions I think you have already answered because it relates directly to V.C.P. and the timescale that the Chair has just mentioned, so thank you, Minister.

The Minister for Children and Education:

The quicker we progress with the policy, the quicker a decision can be made.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, okay. Please can you provide advice about the progress and how funding of such projects set out under the capital heads of expenditure in the Government Plan are tracked and monitored?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I am also happy to share. So I do have a tracker and I personally meet with the team that are responsible for the capital delivery once a month. I will update it, what has progressed, what has not progressed, where are barriers I am having. I started to have more meetings with the Minister for Infrastructure and Jersey Property Holdings because there is lots of cross-work between us and Jersey Property Holdings. We are tenants and some work needs to be delivered by Jersey Property Holdings and there is a capacity issue. We have delivered this, yes, so basically Mont à l'Abbé extension project completion date December 2023 is planned, so it is on track, which is good. We have delivered all our minor capital projects as were planned at the beginning of the year through the schools. We did complete air-conditioning stage 3 at Les Quennevais School, so it was stage 2

that we created, then stage 3. We have progressed with the shading programme, as it was agreed, so we continue to develop the shading programme but whatever was planned for 2023. We have done more in 2023 because, as you know, we had this fire audit and for July and August there was so much capital work was done to make sure that we are meeting fire regulations.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay. We are moving on to our business cases. In response to written question number 371/2023 the Minister for Treasury and Resources outlined all of the business cases which were considered, including those which were not included in the proposed Government Plan. Please could you outline the process that you undertook to prioritise and decide where to focus your funding for this current Government Plan?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Sure. As you can imagine, each department comes with a very big shopping list: this is so much we want; we always want more. It is always the restriction of the funding envelope. The conversation is ongoing even between the departments how we can work together. For example, there is some stuff that I will deliver, together with the Economy Department because they have their 1 per cent funding for the arts and music. Some of these funds I put my own bid on the arts and music. Some of the funds I cannot get but we disagreed with the Minister that we would like to continue with arts and something would be funded from them, Economy Department. For example, in my Government Plan bids that was an extension of music provision at schools. So we currently have 10 lessons only for Year 4 but I have suggested that Year 2 instruments for all Government schools would help the children to connect early to the instruments. We know that the funds, hopefully, in 2027 would look better than we have in 2024 because there is a projection, there is a fiscal. We had gone to the Community Foundation and said: "Would you be willing to do the pilot and we would need to see the impact and see if it does make any change?" They supported us with the delivery for Year 2 and Year 8 in Haute Vallee, it is like a bridging funding. We have the understanding if the pilot works well we will be able to take into the Government Plan in 2 years. There is lots of options when we come with ideas and what we would like to do and how you work with others. Saying this, it was clear for me that I am not backing on inclusion and we do have inclusion from last year and we are allocating another £1 million this year. We continue with the inclusion project. It used to be increasing. We might not increase by hard but we are increasing well enough to make sure if you want to ... probably Jonathan can give you a bit more detail. For example, we know that in inclusion we need to do extension to La Passerelle Secondary, there is a mad need, and we will ... La Passerelle, it is La Sente Secondary but we call it La Passerelle, so ...

The Connétable of Grouville:

All right. I do not think we have been there yet, have we?

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Not the secondary part, no.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Not the secondary but we know that we have increased need and we need to make sure that we are meeting this increased need and this is why, for example, extra £328,000 will be allocated for this particular project for this particular school to support these children. We had at the beginning 20, now we have around 35 but we can get it up to 60 need. La Passerelle, basically there is lots of children with anxiety and difficulties with mental health and well-being and once they are studying in a more small environment at the bigger school and slowly introduce back. I will mention the youth workers. We have a bid for the 2 children's homes but why we put it in, it was accepted because we needed to open in February or March; I think that everyone will remember this. We have opened, we have found somewhere, but we need to continue to run it and the running costs of 2 children's homes for a year for 4 children, this is the cost.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Okay.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Did that answer the question, Connétable?

The Connétable of Grouville:

Yes, indeed. Some of the business cases not taken forward related to digital education and inclusion funding for fee-paying Government-provided schools. Why were these not taken forward?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think that the fee-paying Government-provided schools Richard responded, but he can go through it fully because I am not there.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

We are looking into that at the moment, yes.

The Connétable of Grouville:

You are looking, okay, good.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. Basically one of the things when we sought about one model but if I understand correctly from Richard we can encourage all 4 Government-paying schools to work together and see if we can create a specific offer based on the budget that we have in gross. Digital education, it was a very big business case which consisted of hardware and the skills. Now what we have done, we tried to get everything; obviously we did not. What we are doing now, our officers are working closely with colleagues in Treasury and Exchequer to make sure that we find a solution. It might be going through the capitals for I.T. for the hardware at schools because we cannot operate schools without I.T. At the same time it was a created group between M. and D. (Modernisation and Digital), C.Y.P.E.S. and the Economy Department to develop the skills approach and something can go through Skills and Digital Jersey, something can go through M. and D. and something can go through the Economy. We are trying to create a solution to progress on that.

The Connétable of Grouville:

If any of those cases were unsuccessful, do you intend to review those?

The Minister for Children and Education:

First of all, let us see what we can deliver because we are separating and we are trying to find the way of progress. I am sure that we will submit a different business case for digital in April, this is what they are working around, so we will definitely see if we can meet our hardware this year. We are looking at what are the options this year and the beginning of 2024 and maybe the hardware will be addressed. In this case we are creating ... this is why officers from 3 departments are working together to create a new business case for skills.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Good. From a footnote provided in that written question response, it appears that some of the revenue growth requests were not taken forward separately but have been amalgamated into the investment across C.Y.P.E.S.'s front line. Can you outline the process that was undertaken for this process?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I was on leave, I was on my operation. This is what I found when I got back but Richard and Rob were there.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Do you want me to start?

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, if you would.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Effectively, I think this is a helpful thing for our department because you will be aware that our Government Plan really focused very much on continuing education and key reform, plus the addition of elements and items. The categorisation into front line services means that we have some flexibility around how we can use that funding, again targeted at front line services. It gives us the ability to think about how where we might have more success within some parts of our recruitment, we are able to potentially buy in some of our budget in year to support that. If you get more success in education, we can continue to grow in that space, as an example. It is a helpful way for us to approach our growth overall, rather than being restricted to specific pots.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

We use the funds in the best possible way.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes. We are obviously a statutory service, so we have the risk of in-year costs, we have the risk of additional packages of care, additional activity within both education and Children's Services specialist activity and that all has cost that can be incurred. This gives us a bit more flexibility in how we manage in that cost potentially.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I am sure our panel would agree that we are concerned about the provision of front line services across the whole estate, so that is our concern.

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

Yes. Yes, I think it is really important to note that with the residual growth that we have going into 2024, plus the additional growth, despite the fact that we have an efficiency target, we are still a department that is in a position of growth. Our F.T.E. (Full-Time Equivalent) is a growing position; we are likely to see that continue. This is not about cutting staff and not having as many staff, it is about being realistic in our ability to grow to the ability to recruit, in all honesty. That is why the percentage value for us in V.F.M. (value for money), while it is significant, it is set against a really big investment that we have received overall.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is really difficult when you go ... we did have a position in the States and after all this in the media that the Government numbers are growing.

[14:00]

I was very clear if people would like to see services delivered and children supported through schools, only our department this year recruited above 200 people into the system. Yes, the number would look high but I cannot see how we can continue to deliver services with complexities and not to recruit people who would do this.

Deputy B. Porée:

Yes, we agree with the panel, recruitment is ongoing, is it not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes. Our camp has really grown from 20, it will be 80 within 3 years and somebody told me in the U.K.: "You have like golden stars" but we still would like to improve the assessments and some of the money of this investment would go to buy in extra to make sure that assessments are done quicker but the numbers would increase in the C.Y.P.E.S., all this stuff.

The Connétable of Grouville:

Thank you, Minister.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, so I am going to carry on with this line of questioning around C.Y.P.E.S. and the front line services. Please could you provide more information about the front line services that will be provided by the Education Directorate? This is with regards to your response on 24th October about a £2.6 million funding request for investment across C.Y.P.E.S.

The Minister for Children and Education:

That one, okay. Yes. It is about for C.Y.P.E.S. including Youth Service comes demographic changes, like we had the highest intake into the Year 7 in the secondary schools. We have higher complexities, children with special education needs, and like I said about La Passerelle that the children who need to get out of the main school, so it will be across Youth Service comes inclusion and social care.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay. Could you maybe be a bit more specific in terms of the proportion of the £2.6 million funding requested for C.Y.P.E.S. from client services, how they will be allocated within there?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, okay. Yes, sure. What is important to understand that this is £2.6 million, it will go to £2.9 million, coming on top of £18 million that ...

Deputy B. Porée:

£8 million ...

The Minister for Children and Education:

£18 million that was allocated for us already. It is not just this because we still have £18 million in our gross. From that particular £2.6 million you have it going to £2.9 million, we are moving some stuff around. We have specific pressures, inclusion teams at school £1 million; neurodevelopment assessment and follow-ups around £500,000; demographics, which is a record of needs and special education need, we have increased and S.E.N. (special educational needs) more than we expected and it would be £474,000; targeted 2 to 3 support £450,000; extension to La Passerelle Secondary and might need £328,000 and 5 posts of a Jersey Youth Service is £185,000.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, £185,000. What about C.A.M.H.S., did you mention C.A.M.H.S.?

The Minister for Children and Education:

This was £500,000 for neurodevelopment assessments.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, thank you for that. You did say it is no longer £2.6 million, it has gone up to £2.9 million.

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is £2,937,000, yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

Creeping up very quickly to £3 million.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, thank you. What timeline have you put in place for the development of the plan to establish an inclusive education system?

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, we are in the progress. We are going to publish inclusive charter, I think it is January 2024. But Jonathan, he is the manager for the inclusion programme and probably give you a bit more details.

Programme Director, Education Reform:

Yes, we received the recommendations of the inclusion review a couple of years ago now, so we are 2 years into that programme of work. Indeed some of the investment the Minister has referenced has been invested directly into schools last year and will continue to be invested over the next few years. When we talk about things like increasing quality and capacity of workforce that is very much as a consequence of that investment being delivered. The Minister is right to reference one of the big changes that will happen next is the publication of the inclusion charter, so that sets out our commitment, our destination, if you like. Underneath that we then have to work with all providers, whether that is schools or our third-sector partners or otherwise, how we get towards that destination. That will continue. But as we set out with the Minister's response to that £2.6 million increase for next year, a number of those items are specifically related to continued investments in inclusion and perhaps where there are some specific pressures we have identified coming into 2024. Last point there, we have a lead and a programme team around the implementation of the inclusion review and would be very happy - in fact I know that you would be delighted - to have some time on the panel to talk through some of those plans in more detail. Because it is a very comprehensive set of activities in response to those 51 recommendations we received a couple of years ago.

Deputy B. Porée:

That would be great, thank you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

We look forward to that.

Deputy B. Porée:

Did you also mention possible publication of needs chart? Did you say that the ...

Programme Director, Education Reform:

Of the charter, yes. We are undertaking a series of different consultations with a host of different stakeholders at the moment to make sure that it is a really co-developed piece of work. The idea is to then share that more widely in the first quarter of next year. Our provisional plans are in January but ...

Deputy B. Porée:

That is what I was going to ask, so next quarter of 2024.

Programme Director, Education Reform:

Yes, yes, and I will ask the team to share that detail with you in advance if you would like to have a chance to see that.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, that is really good, thank you. The panel also notes that you are considering increasing funding and investment in children and young people with special education needs and for those receiving a record of need inclusion in early years provision and a specialist workforce to support vulnerable children. Has an allocation from the now £2.9 million funding requested in this Government Plan been made for any of those services?

Programme Director, Education Reform:

If I may just clarify one point, the Minister reflected that against the £6 million that is potentially available to us - if the debate finds in favour of the proposal in December - we have already received pressures, demands of £2.9 million. We will have to pull it back down to £2.6 million because that will be our budget. But in the context of some of those specialist resources, just to give some examples of things that we might do, we are working with our colleagues in Health and Community Services around occupational therapy. We are working with our colleagues there about speech and language therapy to understand how best to provide those services, either at a universal level, so how might, for example, we work with the speech and language therapy team to put more provision across all schools to identify that subset of children who require more support, and then what is that model for more support. So we are actively working with those kind of specialist service providers, often colleagues within Government, to see how we can augment that service. It is not just in schools, as you reflected; that is also across early years and indeed in our post-16 provision. So we are thinking about those different cohorts of children and young people, how their needs might manifest and how best we can support them, and that is our continued improvement journey as it relates to inclusion.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I think it is really important to remember that we do have £6 million plus growth from last year that is coming into this year as well, so we have for inclusion not just this £2.6 million but we are working out the details. We also have from last year. It did not go anywhere; it stayed with us.

Deputy B. Porée:

Thank you. So you did mention some I believe of the breakdown of those fundings which will be used in occupational therapy, speech therapy services; any other areas you would feel like mentioning?

Programme Director, Education Reform:

I should say first of all potentially, because we are exploring the different areas, I do not want to give the impression that there is a commitment because it might be we decide to point it in a different direction. But we are going through quite a rigorous process with my colleagues to understand the need and think about how to prioritise that need because, as the Minister has alluded to, there is always more demand in terms of things to do than there is our ability to supply it, whether it is through money or through workforce. But those are some of the key areas. We are looking a lot at working to increase our capacity and our capability in teaching assistants, which is a core part of our workforce in schools. So we have projects under way to look at the framework that takes you from perhaps entering into that career, all the way through to perhaps becoming a specialist teaching assistant and looking after children with complex needs. So that development is another part of our workforce. We have also started and will continue to work with our Special Educational Needs coordinators, our S.E.N.C.o.s (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator), not only in schools where we put some masters level qualifications investment recently, but also in early years, both in government provision and also in external provision; so either a third sector or private setting. So we are looking to work with those groups as well to make sure wherever you are receiving your childcare if you are a young child you get the best possible quality, and our stakeholders have been exceptionally supportive and appropriately challenging of us in that context.

Deputy B. Porée:

Thank you for that. I did hear that you mentioned obviously a lot of work is being done in identifying where the needs are and how you can meet those needs. I appreciate that. So can I ask if any progress has been made in relation to the level of the services as we speak, or you are not at that stage yet?

Programme Director, Education Reform:

I will just talk a little bit perhaps about services in schools, then colleagues may wish to talk about perhaps some similar things that we are developing in C.A.M.H.S. to support young children. But in schools a lot of the work has been around undertaking or developing and implementing processes to really understand the needs of the young people and children attending schools. So perhaps the best example is with the record of need. We have tried to stabilise the amount of funding that is provided for a child on the record of need. We call it base funding, sorry for the jargon in there, but a core amount that is received by schools for all children with a record of need. We then need to think about the additional complexities of their need above and beyond that base level, and we have a means by which we can then differentiate funding. That is a process of working with a host of different partners to get to a stage where we can understand the complexity of need and, therefore, support. We can then back that up with money that is passed to the school, but that financial

transaction - often considered the critical one - is just an enabler. That enables the school leaders and the inclusion team to think about the best package of support the school can put in place for that child or young person. That is an example of how those services are being delivered and improved already. An example of how we might extend that, so further improvements, we are working with other colleagues across the Government, so particularly, again, the speech and language therapy team, to move towards what is described as neuro-affirming practice, so really understanding and valuing the neuro-divergent child or young person and thinking about how best their support could be provided. So that is a good example of what we have done so far under the Minister's instruction to be more inclusive, but also reflecting, as ever - and again it sounds slightly cliché - but this is a journey of improvement, so we can see what our next steps are in the context of improving services. I do not know, Rob, if you want to just reflect on some of the things that Darren is undertaking around service development?

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

I think the key pressure for us is a new development pathway, and where we are seeing such a high level of activity there, and so Darren is actively exploring what we can do in terms of additional capacity, and we are looking at budget flexibility for that, whether that means additional practitioners being brought in, more dedicated sessions. We are really pushing to advance the work with the G.P.s (general practitioner) around prescribing. That will make a big difference for us and it is going to feature in our inspection report, we are sure, which we have just had, in terms of the inspection. So those 2 areas are the key things that we need to do in C.A.M.H.S. The interface with the schools is going really well; it is now really a demand challenge and we need additional capacity and to free up capacity where possible to do that.

Deputy B. Porée:

A lot of work and resources has been put in, in identifying those needs, and we do appreciate that. Perhaps in the near future you can give us some information on the progress that is then being made and we can see the hard work flourishing really.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Maybe we need to do a briefing because I do not think that we did a briefing for the panel about the work from C.A.M.H.S. and development of C.A.M.H.S.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

No, I do not think we have.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, I think that the briefing about C.A.M.H.S. work and future plans would be ...

Deputy B. Porée:

Yes, and then we can work together along that journey.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, absolutely.

Deputy B. Porée:

Now with regards to youth workers, how many additional youth workers will be recruited to projects in the west of the Island?

The Minister for Children and Education:

They will not be recruited. We have 5 youth workers that were part-time, like half off, and obviously what we found out ... they work in 5 different projects and what we found out is that to make sure that they can make their living they needed to find other jobs and it was not consistent and it will not be. So what we are doing, we are making them from part-time to full-time.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

So they will have permanent contracts?

The Minister for Children and Education:

They will have contracts, yes, full-time permanent contracts, and what has been discussed, I know there was a bid also to have a youth worker at the skate park, but again, we ... first of all it can be not just the Government, we have Jersey Sports who can take care, but we discussed how they can incorporate with the shared hours shifts between them to cover for the use for the skate park.

[14:15]

Deputy B. Porée:

That sounds appropriate.

The Minister for Children and Education:

So it is not 5 new people, it is the 5 people who work in the system but they will have a proper contract and they will have options for their trainings, for their development, supervision, and to work more with the children.

Deputy B. Porée:

I will ask anyway, the full-time salary for these 5 members will come out of your £2.6 million budget?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy B. Porée:

Okay, thank you. Can you please provide more information about the additional support you are seeking to provide to C.A.M.H.S. to improve services, and what cost you are anticipating for that extra support?

Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:

We will be seeking potentially additional budget within C.A.M.H.S., so effectively our spend position within C.A.M.H.S., Children's Services as well, because we anticipate we are probably going to need additional capacity in that space to have more sessional activity. That is really focussing on the waiting list.

The Minister for Children and Education:

I mean, we are giving £500,000 for them, see if it would help, and we need to probably build another business case for the next Government Plan.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I have some questions about the N.E.E.T. (Not in Education, Employment or Training) programme, the investment in young people workforce participation. So the panel notes that the new combined provision approach will introduce partnership working and include a triage service. So, please can you provide an overview of how the consolidation of the current provisions and services supporting young people will operate in practice?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I am not sure if I shared with the panel the 2 tables, these type of tables, if you received. If not I would be very happy to share.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

We had the business case and so on.

The Minister for Children and Education:

No, no, no, there are 2 tables, how it was before, the structure before ...

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

I do not think we have had that.

The Minister for Children and Education:

... and how the structure would ... I will be happy to leave it and share it with you. So basically before what has happened, when I found out that we had 4 unconnected provisions, so 3 unconnected, we have the Youth Service in partnership with the Princes Trust, they had their own programme. We had the Highlands Programme, which is Re-engage, and we had the Skills Jersey programme which is traineeship. The 3 programmes run, some of them from the Fiscal Stimulus Fund, some of them were from Princes Trust, so it was provisions. When we look into the cohort we have currently 123 identified from the supplier list, record of needs and children looked after. Plus we have tried to do fact findings from 11 to 16 schools. So, when we identify this cohort it is important to look at the domestic cohort to do the triage at the first place; what are the needs, what is the right way to address the needs. So I will share with you this process but the triage will be selection of activities and training to empower young people to inform their best possible pathway. It will be career guidance, and C.A.M.H.S. part is provided support for the mental health and well-being intervention because some of them are not going into employment and education because of their mental health and well-being state. So C.A.M.H.S. would be part of this triage programme. From there they will receive skills mentoring, so it will be multiple joined-up referral points which will be leading to triage, and destination tracker, and identify the key lead of the profession. So we are looking on each child individually going through the stages of triage, and it will be decided which way they would go. So the numbers that I have today, and this is the latest number that was presented to me; from 123 currently we have 84 that through this triage system move into the further education. We have 39 who did not move into the further education. From these 39 we have 7 are supported by Back to Work, 7 in full appointment apprenticeship type, and 20 - and this is the 20 cohort that we identified that are now being fully supported by Skills in Jersey Employment Trust - and they are going with the mentors as well. So they are taken through the process to find what way will be the best for them. We have 5 completely disengaged. We will have deep dives into each individual planned by combining the provision of the stakeholders. Because if they went to Highlands they were not with the mentoring programme, if they went to the mentoring programme ... so currently it is a joined-up approach that all stakeholders working together and creating the best pathway.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thanks. Something about the costs of the programme: is the recruitment of additional staff the cost basically of the programme?

The Minister for Children and Education:

The cost of the programme, you need to pay for the mentors, so we did have a cost. The traineeship programme was costing money but it was paid from the Fiscal Stimulus Grant, and reengaged through the Highlands were paid from the Fiscal Stimulus. So it wasn't our core budget, so the

programmes were running, the people are employed, the people are working but it was not from our Education budget. They finished, yes, so we realised the programmes worked, so the people who worked within our Skills Department and were paid from the Fiscal Stimulus, they still continued to work and to co-ordinate and mentor but they need to be paid. This is the investment.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. So what feedback have you received from schools about the proposals to consolidate the current provisions and services?

The Minister for Children and Education:

I am not sure that it was from schools because schools are ... they are sharing with us their concerns about specific students that will be not in employment and education after. So we have the schools provision but after school when their compulsory education finishes, when they become 16 and they have choices, this is where the need is coming in.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Have you received feedback from young people?

The Minister for Children and Education:

The feedback that I received from the young people when I went last year, and I think, Richard, you went this year to the graduation, and you can see the process that they have done and it was very clear this programme is extremely important to make sure that we are bringing them back on track.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

People will turn up who have not previously turned up to school, there are very positive results, yes, and in fact when it came to the money it was one of the things that I ensured we got funding for when we discussed the Government Plan.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Because I remember from last year I think there was very good feedback that I could see on social media and so on about the Prince's Trust programme and so on. So the plans and what is going on currently as well builds on that as well?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, it is all brought together.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The panel notes that a support network will reduce confusion and improve engagement. How will the plans to consolidate the current provisions and services be communicated to young people and their parents and/or carers?

The Minister for Children and Education:

This is why it was so important to start to do it centrally because we have centrally in schools team that contacted these children, they are contacting their parents, and they are doing this triage so basically they are funnelling to the right directions. So you have one point of contact; then you had 3 points of contacts. People know that they can ... it is not just them coming to us, it is also us coming to them through different revenues that we received.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay. This sort of follows on. How will the process of transitioning the support provided to young people be managed from the current provisions and services to the new combined approach, or that is already in place?

The Minister for Children and Education:

It is done, because all the young people who have been identified currently from the supplier said they identify not employment or education, we know children from the record of needs, we know there are some children who are looked after in our care who are not in employment or education, plus reports from school. This is why it is important that we are holding this together and going deep dive into each one of them. So if we know that 84 is in further education we would receive reports from the further education, how does it progress and if they see any difficulties, and if our mentors would need to step in to support if halfway through they will see some disengagement.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

The panel notes that 84 young people have moved into further education. If a young person subsequently leaves further education or their circumstances change is this tracked?

The Minister for Children and Education:

This is what I exactly said. So if something happening all the way through it will be reported back to the core team at Skills and they will get in touch and see what are the avenues. This is why it was so important to create a joined-up system, that it will be tracked, that they will not fall between chairs in the middle. I will leave you the diagrams, how does it work, so it probably would make sense.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Great. I am just trying to remember; how long would this go on for, for the young person then?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Just started.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Yes, but how long for them; until what age? Is the process like a set time commitment for the young person or is it just to see that they are settled somewhere?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Generally they need to settle because what we would like to see, we would like to see that the young people finding themselves in employment, education, goes from education to employment on the employment route. If we are not managing to get them into the earlier access to education and employment, we will see the benefits for them and for us.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Okay, and now I have got the last question.

The Minister for Children and Education:

We are almost on time this time.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Very good timing, is it not?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Please can you provide more information about the deep dives into each individual plan by combined provision stakeholders?

The Minister for Children and Education:

Yes, absolutely. So what we have, we have coaching and mentoring, so each young person would have a coach or a mentor. Somebody would need more; somebody would need it on a weekly basis or twice a week and somebody might need it once a month. It depends on the need. So it is a separate provision and it is accessible at any time. It is constant review and communication throughout, and because we have C.A.M.H.S. with us and we have a Y.E.S. (Youth Enquiry Service) service support accessible throughout. So it is not just meant if they will feel there is issues around their mental health and well-being they would have access to the services.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

That is great, thank you.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I would like to record, if I may, Chair, I was very kindly on our recent visit to the Isle of Man invited by the Minister and Deputy Minister to a visit to the Education Department and to St. Christopher facilities and so on, and I very much appreciated that. I would like to thank you publicly for that.

Assistant Minister for Children and Education:

We were going to leave you there originally.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Good to work together.

The Connétable of Grouville:

I bought you a round of drinks at the end.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

All right.

The Minister for Children and Education:

Thank you.

Deputy C.D. Curtis:

Thanks very much.

[14:28]