

STATES OF JERSEY



DEFINING THE COST OF MINISTERIAL GOVERNMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 21st September 2015
by Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Council of Ministers to provide, in the Addition to the Medium Term Financial Plan covering the years 2017 to 2019 (that is to be proposed no later than 30th June 2016), breakdowns and estimates of the financial costs and manpower figures (headcount) relating to the dedicated support for Ministers and Assistant Ministers by individual Department and also as a total.

DEPUTY J.A. MARTIN OF ST. HELIER

REPORT

I have decided to bring this simple request/Proposition as I am sure many States Members were very surprised by the answer to my written question 1240/5(8789). I reproduce the written question and reply at the end of this Proposition at the **Appendix**.

I had to allow the Treasury many more weeks than normal to answer my written question because the costs were not held or readily identifiable – the Treasury's words, not mine.

To admit that the cost to support Ministers, and in some departments also the cost to support their Assistant Ministers, is not known or is very hard to calculate, cannot carry on. I do not think this is an unreasonable request; in fact I think that this should have been being addressed over many years, especially as the cost seems to have grown. States Members and the taxpayer cannot measure this as it is not at the moment in a budget or the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

I feel that this request should be adopted by the Council of Ministers and that we should have agreement of this at the same time the MTFP is debated.

How can the States, as a whole, be asked to find savings and the taxpayer be expected to accept them, when the cost of our Ministers is what they decide to spend on their office support, their travel, or any other support they may feel they need? No, this cannot carry on; there must be a budget and estimates of the cost going forward. This is so that proper scrutiny can be done and, if as we are told, costs will go down when/if departments amalgamate, there will be monies in budgets for Scrutiny Panels to judge against.

We have had just over 10 years of ministerial government, and not to have at least a base budget for all of the expected costs is no way to run part of the States of Jersey. I know the majority of States Members will agree with me. I am hopeful that the Council of Ministers will take this on board before we debate the MTFP, and that they will produce the breakdowns and estimates of the financial costs that I am requesting here. I have lodged this Proposition to get that result, but if that is not possible, it will be debated in the Assembly and you will all get the chance to decide if you really want Transparency, Openness and Accountability going forward.

Financial and manpower implications

I have been advised by the Treasury that there would be no additional financial or staffing implications as a consequence of this Proposition being adopted.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY J.A. MARTIN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 14th July 2015**

Question

Can the Chief Minister –

- 1 outline the portfolio of each Minister and how this is supported by Assistant Ministers?
- 2 itemise the annual cost of each Ministerial Department, including support of the Assistant Minister(s) to take into account the cost of:
 - office space (rental)
 - secretarial/administrative support
 - direct officer support (giving the number and grades of the officers involved)
 - IT support
 - telephone costs
 - travel costs?
- 3 provide the whole budget for supporting Ministerial Government expressed in the same way as the allocation to Scrutiny is shown in the States Assembly accounts and indicate whether this budget can be identified in the States accounts and, if so, how?
4. advise when, and how, this budget was agreed and whether it is inflated in accordance with the cost of living each year and whether there have been any over or under-spends to date?
5. provide the budgets and manpower figures specifically relating to supporting Ministers from December 2011 until the election of the new Council of Ministers in November 2014 to give a full 3-year account of the cost of supporting ministerial government?

Answer

1. In accordance with Article 30A of the States of Jersey Law 2005, the Chief Minister is required to ‘establish, maintain and publish a list of Ministers and Assistant Ministers and the functions exercisable by each of them and by the Chief Minister personally.’ The most recent published list is contained in [R.19/2014](#).
2. Estimated costs for each Minister for 2014 are shown in the table below. These figures have been calculated by Departments solely for the purpose of answering this question and are approximate.

2014	Home Affairs	Social Security	Treasury & Resources	Education, Sport & Culture	Transport & Technical Services	Environment	Chief Minister, Housing & External Relations Ministers	Economic Development	Health & Social Services
Office space (rental)	£10,950	£3,000	£6,574	£5,100	£4,500	£6,000	£8,858	£9,000	£5,400
I.T support	£900	£599	£900	£450	£827	£450	£2,700	£900	£900
Telephone costs	£223	£84	£135	£488	£628	£22	£2,937	£306	£232
Travel costs	£0	£0	£17,029	£2,111	£0	£2,367	£41,418	£10,108	£300

2013	Home Affairs	Social Security	Treasury & Resources	Education, Sport & Culture	Transport & Technical Services	Environment	Chief Minister, Housing & External Relations Ministers	Economic Development	Health & Social Services
Office space (rental)	£5,820	£3,000	£6,414	£5,100	£4,500	£6,000	£8,404	£9,000	£5,400
I.T support	£900	£427	£900	£450	£827	£450	£1,350	£900	£900
Telephone costs	£345	£84	£199	£488	£628	£324	£1,684	£306	£232
Travel costs	£0	£0	£17,132	£2,111	£0	£2,367	£20,383	£10,108	£300

2012	Home Affairs	Social Security	Treasury & Resources	Education, Sport & Culture	Transport & Technical Services	Environment	Chief Minister & External Relations Minister	Economic Development	Health & Social Services
Office space (rental)	£5,820	£3,000	£6,257	£5,100	£4,500	£6,000	£8,200	£9,000	£5,400
I.T support	£900	£1,097	£900	£450	£827	£450	£1,350	£900	£900
Telephone costs	£292	£84	£1,255	£488	£628	£315	£1,819	£306	£232
Travel costs	£66	£0	£15,646	£1,620	£0	£2,292	£8,644	£10,230	£3,566

Notes

- Secretarial/administrative support and direct officer support: Departments vary in how Ministers are supported and their PAs perform a range of tasks. PAs/secretaries often manage the administration of the Minister, Assistant Minister and Chief Officer, and also perform other work for the department, as required. Likewise, officers undertake a range of functions and provide a varying level of specific support for individual Ministers and Assistant Ministers as the work demands. However, I can confirm that the Treasury and Resources Minister and Chief Minister both have dedicated PAs (who also work for the relevant Assistant Minister and Assistant Chief Ministers) and their costs amount to an average of £67,000 per year for the Treasury Minister and c. £90,000 for the Chief Minister. As the organisation becomes more flexible and departments work more closely together, these kinds of estimations will become even more difficult. For instance, the new Community and Constitutional Affairs department is made up of a variety of officers and administration staff who support a number of ministers and assistant ministers (Chief Minister, Housing Minister, Home Affairs Minister and Assistant Minister, the chair of the Legislation Advisory Panel, and an Assistant Chief Minister) and discharge a range of policy and operational functions. This makes it difficult to separate out the percentage of support provided by specific staff members to individual Ministers and Assistant Ministers, compared with their departmental work.
 - Travel cost: Data for 2014 has not yet been published. Where updated information is not available, 2013 data from R.158/2014 is used as an indication of cost and/or taken from reports published to the States Assembly.
 - Office space costs: Shown as notional rental values. Most departments do not rent office space.
3. The budget for supporting Ministerial Government is not separately identifiable within the States' Financial Report and Accounts, and as noted above, it is not readily possible to separate work undertaken on behalf of a Minister and work undertaken on behalf of a Department, and indeed, they are ultimately one and the same thing, i.e. the cost of ministerial government is the cost of government.
 4. This cost is not managed by departments as a separately identifiable budget. As such it is not subject to specific over or underspends. Pay and non-pay inflation will have been allocated in accordance with arrangements across all departmental expenditure.
 5. As outlined above, budgets and manpower figures are not specifically identified for supporting Ministers so it is not possible to give a meaningful answer to this question. As an example, where the costs of secretarial and administrative support have been given these relate in most cases to a fraction of an employee's time. The table shown in the answer to question 1 is also shown for 2013 and 2012 to allow the Deputy to approximate a cost.