

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND
CULTURE BY SENATOR J.L. PERCHARD
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 30th NOVEMBER 2010**

Question

Will the Minister outline his options and proposals to deliver the Education, Sport and Culture Department's 10% CSR savings should the States decide in 2011 that the grants to fee-paying/private schools are not to be reduced by more than a total of 10% as required by the CSR savings?

Answer

Reducing the subsidy to fee-paying schools is one of a range of measures being explored as the department seeks to deliver the 10% savings target for the Comprehensive Spending Review. No area of ESC has been immune from this process. All parts of ESC budget have been analysed and savings have been identified that spread the burden of the cuts fairly and in a way that, although difficult, are achievable over time. All the proposals have been scrutinised and our conclusions supported by independent consultants Tribal and the Steering Group responsible for the Peer Review.

The ESC department has been working to identify savings for some time. It has already delivered efficiencies of nearly £4 million between 2003 and 2010. Over the past few years, the fee paying sector has not been required to deliver efficiency savings, unlike our States sector schools. As part of the Comprehensive Spending Review we have been asked to deliver further savings totalling £11 million by 2013. There has never been any requirement that the CSR savings should be limited to 10% in any one area.

The exact amount of saving to be achieved from the reduction in subsidy will be determined once the independent reviews currently under way have been completed. The proposal will be included in the 2012 business plan and Members have the opportunity to debate this when this document comes before the States next year.

The savings proposed for the period 2011 to 2013 are considered to be the most appropriate if front line services are to be maintained. If the expected savings cannot be achieved from the reduction in subsidy – or it is limited to 10% - the funds will have to be found from elsewhere within ESC and this means frontline services. Investigations have shown that many of the areas which have already delivered savings would be severely affected by a further reduction in funding and the services they provide would be compromised.

Areas identified and rejected were:-

- Close both the Youth Service and Library provision.
- Close sport centres and remove the majority of the funding for sport in the Island.
- Discontinue all free nursery education provided through the nursery education fund and schools.

As Minister of Education Sport and Culture I am not prepared to see the erosion of a range of essential services nor do I believe that members would consider it to be acceptable. It is my firm belief that by working closely with the fee-paying schools, savings can be achieved and the overall educational opportunities improved, even though I accept that some increase in fees may be necessary.