

STATES OF JERSEY



GOVERNMENT PLAN 2021–2024 (P.130/2020): SECOND AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 27th November 2020
by the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

STATES GREFFE

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (f) –

After the words “Appendix 2 – Summary Tables 5(i) and (ii) of the Report” insert the words –

“, except that, in Summary Table 5(i), the head of expenditure for the Department of Children, Young People, Education and Skills shall be increased by £159,000 to allow for increased funding for the Jersey Premium, with other affected lines in Summary Table 5(i) to be updated accordingly”.

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND HOME AFFAIRS SCRUTINY PANEL

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

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

to receive the Government Plan 2021 – 2024 specified in Article 9(1) of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 (“the Law”) and specifically –

- (a) to approve the estimate of total States income to be paid into the Consolidated Fund in 2021 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 1 to the Report, which is inclusive of the proposed taxation and impôts duties changes outlined in the Government Plan, in line with Article 9(2)(a) of the Law;
- (b) to approve the amounts to be transferred from one States fund to another for 2021, in line with Article 9(2)(b) as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 2 to the Report;
- (c) to approve the proposed borrowing to be obtained for 2021, in line with Article 9 (2)(c), up to and including the amount set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 3 to the Report;
- (d) to approve each major project that is to be started or continued in 2021 and the total cost of each such project and any amendments to the proposed total cost of a major project under a previously approved government plan, in line with Article 9(2)(d), (e) and (f) of the Law and as set out in Appendix 2 - Summary Table 4 to the Report;
- (e) to endorse the efficiencies and other re-balancing measures for 2021 contained in the Government Plan as set out in Appendix 2 Summary Table 6 and reflected within each gross head of expenditure in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 5(i);

- (f) to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from the Consolidated Fund for 2021, for each head of expenditure, being gross expenditure less estimated income (if any), in line with Articles 9(2)(g), 10(1) and 10(2) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Tables 5(i) and (ii) of the Report, except that, in Summary Table 5(i), the head of expenditure for the Department of Children, Young People, Education and Skills shall be increased by £159,000 to allow for increased funding for the Jersey Premium, with other affected lines in Summary Table 5(i) to be updated accordingly;
- (g) to approve the estimated income, being estimated gross income less expenditure, that each States trading operation will pay into its trading fund in 2021 in line with Article 9(2)(h) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 7 to the Report;
- (h) to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from each States trading operation’s trading fund for 2021 for each head of expenditure in line with Article 9(2)(i) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 8 to the Report; (i) to approve the estimated income and expenditure proposals for the Climate Emergency Fund for 2021 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 9 to the Report;
- (i) to approve the estimated income and expenditure proposals for the Climate Emergency Fund for 2021 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 9 to the Report;
- (j) to approve, in accordance with Article 9(1) of the Law, the Government Plan 2021-2024, as set out at Appendix 3 to the Report.

REPORT

The Jersey Premium is a targeted funding programme for schools and colleges which has been introduced to help all pupils get the very best from their education. The funding is allocated based on the number of children that fall within the following categories:

1. Pupils who are, or have been looked after children.
2. Pupils from households who have recently claimed Income Support.
3. Pupils from households with 'Registered Status' that would qualify to claim Income Support if they had lived in Jersey for five years.¹

Schools and colleges receive extra funding calculated on the number of eligible children they have each year. The school or college decides how they use the funding to improve the child's educational experience and outcomes. Children attending a school nursery are also entitled to ten additional hours a week of free nursery education. According to recent information published by the Children's Commissioner, in 2019, 2,248 children were eligible for the Jersey Premium funding.² Furthermore, 4,900 children were identified as living in low-income families or materially deprived.³

In reviewing the Government Plan 2021-24, the Panel notes that the allocation of funding for the Jersey Premium in 2021 has been reduced by £159,000 from a projected £815,000 to £656,000. The reason given for this reduction was as follows:

The 2020 budget was £2,899,000 and the forecast spend at the end of October is £2,562,000 so a forecast underspend of £336k.

As part of the 2021 rebalancing exercise £159k was removed from Jersey Premium within "Improving Standards". The GP20 proposal was for an additional £815,000 in 2021 compared with the 2019 base but it is now revised to £656,000.

In 2021, there will therefore be £591,000 more budget available than will be spent by the end of 2020. (£255k more budget plus the underspend of £336k).

The Panel was also informed that this is enough to fund all need at the current rates.

The Panel holds a number of concerns about this proposed reduction in funding. First and foremost, the impact of COVID-19 on children's education is well documented. The joint survey between Children, Young People, Education and Skills and the Children's Commissioner highlighted that academic and employment worries during lockdown (especially Education) came second behind concern for others.⁴ Many other concerns were also raised in relation to the impact of COVID-19 on young people's learning within the report.

One area that is especially concerning as a result of COVID-19 is the impact on the more vulnerable children in society. The following comments were received from Every Child Our Future in relation to the COVID-19 schools catch up programme proposed as new revenue expenditure, however, they also relate to vulnerable children in general:

¹ [Gov.je – Jersey Premium](https://www.gov.je/education/learning-and-skills/childrens-commissioner/our-life-in-numbers)

² [Children's Commissioner Report Summary Table - 'Our life in numbers'](#)

³ [Children's Commissioner Report Summary Table - 'Our life in numbers'](#)

⁴ [Joint Survey – Children's Commissioner and CYPES – Question 3](#)

*In the UK, the gap between disadvantaged children and their more affluent peers is set to widen by as much as 75%, meaning a lag of about 2.5 years. Currently the gap in Jersey is about 20% and so if Jersey's experience maps the UK's (based on anecdotal information it would seem that it does), the Government's pledge to narrow the attainment gap is perhaps already unachievable in the near to medium term.*⁵

In fact, the Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills' own report on the impact of learning at home identified that a proportion, but not all, of the students who experienced the most inequality of access and attainment as a result of learning at home were in receipt of the Jersey Premium amongst other matters (including English as an additional language, Special Educational Needs and mental health).⁶

Another aspect to be considered is that Jersey Premium funding is utilised by schools in order to target areas of need. One argument could be made that the reason the budget has seen such an underspend in 2020 is that not all programmes or initiatives carried out through Jersey Premium funding could have operated on account of the lockdown (e.g. after school activities or specialist learning opportunities etc.)

Noting that the Jersey Premium is designed specifically to target children who may be disadvantaged and, in light of the documented impact of COVID-19 on disadvantaged children and young people's education, the Panel is especially concerned that the true impact of COVID-19 on this group may not be fully realised until later in 2021. It is understood that the current need is expected to be met from within the revised allocation, however, the Panel is concerned that removing the additional budget now may cause problems if additional needs that were not accounted for are realised.

It is acknowledged that an additional revenue request has been put forward within the Government Plan 2021-24 in relation to the COVID-19 schools catch up, which will focus on the two following initiatives:

- £224,000 – OLEVI Teaching Programme
- £666,667 – Small Group Tuition (it is noted that circa 3,300 children from various groups have been identified as requiring this support).

Whilst this will address some of the concerns raised by the Panel, the rebalancing of funding associated with the Jersey Premium still has potential to create issues further down the line once the full impact of COVID-19 on students learning is realised. The Panel would therefore caution against reducing the funding at this stage and therefore maintain it at the proposed £815,000 allocated in the previous Government Plan.

Financial and Manpower Implications

This amendment would require an additional £159,000 to be added to the Heads of Expenditure of the Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills and for every year subsequent. This would total an additional £636,000 over the four years of the Government Plan. The Manpower implications do not equate to individual additional posts but the increase in budget would lead to more hours added to care provided. Approximately 80% of the extra costs would therefore be manpower related.

⁵ Submission – Every Child Our Future

⁶ [Impact of Learning at Home Report – p.31](#)