

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE
BY THE CONNETABLE OF ST. HELIER**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 16th MAY 2006

Question 1

Would the Minister inform members –

- (a) whether officers and members of the former Education, Sport and Culture Committee attended the meetings organised by the Parents Action Group in the Town Hall on 13th July and 22nd September 2004, at which concerns were raised about the States' policy on early years child care and, if so, how many members and officers, and which members?
- (b) whether the Minister of Education, Sport and Culture, or the former Education, Sport and Culture Committee, received representations by letter or email from members of the Parents Action Group or Jersey Early Years Association about the States' policy in early years child care, and/or suggestions as to how more equitable provision might be achieved and, if so, when were these received?
- (c) of the exact date when the decision was taken to build a nursery unit as part of the rebuilding of St. Peter's Primary School?

Answer

- (a) Three members of the former Education, Sport and Culture Committee and three officers attended the meeting at the Town Hall on 13th July 2004. Three members and four officers attended the meeting on the 22nd September 2004. The members who attended one or both of these meetings were, Senator Michael Vibert, Deputy Ben Fox, Deputy Judy Martin and former Deputy Julian Bernstein.
- (b) Representations in respect of the States' policy for early education and care were received from both the Parents Action Group and the Jersey Early Years Association prior to 30th September 2005, the closing date for consultation.
- (c) The decision to continue building nursery classes at provided primary schools was taken by the States on 18th February 1997, when the former Education Committee lodged its Proposition in respect of Child Care Provision. Whilst the former Committee had been considering the refurbishment of St. Peter's School for some time, it was formally submitted as a bid to the Capital Development Plan on 24th March 1999.

Question 2

Would the Minister supply a detailed breakdown of the capital and revenue costs provided on 25th April 2006, in relation to the nursery unit at the new St. Peter's School?

Answer

The capital costs of £225,000 were determined by calculating the savings that would accrue to the project if the nursery class was not built. As the nursery unit is an integral part of the specification for the building a detailed breakdown of costs would need to be undertaken by the quantity surveyor. This would incur additional fees.

The revenue costs at 2005 values would be:

1 x Nursery teacher	£43,952
2 x Teaching Assistants	£42,040
1 x Lunchtime Supervision	£ 2,000
Total:	£87,992

It is likely that further costs of approximately £9,000 per annum would be borne by the school's budget in respect of supplies, services and premises.

Question 3

Would the Minister indicate whether he intends to fulfil the pledge made in the consultation document, *Investing in Our Future: a vision for early childhood education and care for children in Jersey (R.C. 54/2005)*, that following the consultation period which ended on 30th September 2005, all the responses received would be used to assist in the formation of more detailed options for the future which, it was stated in the report, were due to be published later in 2005 and, if so, when will he do this?

Answer

As I indicated previously in my answer to this question on 28th March 2006, the development of an Early Childhood Education and Care strategy is a complex piece of work partly because it involves predictions based on significant uncertainties including the availability of additional States funding but also because any resultant model needs to dovetail with the new Income Support System due to be introduced in 2007.

Discussions continue between the Departments for Education, Sport and Culture and Employment and Social Security to develop proposals which will be presented to the States in due course. However, I would remind members that the vision of the former Education, Sport and Culture Committee, set out in the document "*Investing In Our Future*", was an aspiration to take effect in 2008.