

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR
EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 1st MAY 2007

Question

- a) Would the Minister inform members –
- (i) what proportion of the £2.5 million required to fund the 2007 States employees' pay award his department has had to absorb?
 - (ii) what measures have been taken to meet this additional cost?
 - (iii) whether such actions amount to service cuts or delays in certain activities, and
- b) Would the Minister place these in context of measures already taken in response to the need for efficiency savings for 2007?

Answer

- a) (i) The Education, Sport and Culture Department has had to absorb £973,700 of the 2007 States employees' pay award. The Council of Ministers agreed further funding of £275,300, bringing the sum to be absorbed by the department to £698,400.
- (ii) In an attempt to reduce the impact to front line services, the full additional funding of £275,300 has been allocated to schools. Despite this the schools will have to absorb the following sums:

Type of school	Approximate shortfall in pay awards to be absorbed
One form entry Primary	£7,000 - £8,000
Two form entry Primary	£12,000 - £14,000
Three form entry Primary	£16,000 - £18,000
Secondary	£40,000 - £44,000

Other areas of the service have had to absorb the full shortfall in pay awards.

- iii) Although exact figures were not available, all managers were warned at the beginning of the year of the possibility that they would have to meet a shortfall in pay awards from their own budgets. The 2007 budgets were adjusted to inflate the staff budgets for the anticipated pay awards. This was achieved by reducing non staff costs, calculating staff vacancy factors and reallocating to meet the pay award shortfall.

Service cuts and delays in certain activities have not been identified to meet the shortfall in pay awards. However should managers be unable to operate within their reduced budget there is a possibility that they will have to take action such as delaying initiatives or possibly recruitment to avoid overspending in their area.

- b) Efficiency savings of £340,900 were applied to the Education, Sport and Culture budget for 2007. These will be achieved through staff vacancies, increasing income without increasing the associated costs of generating income, for example sales of active cards and various small efficiency savings across the full range of the department's activities.

Areas have reviewed their processes and implemented efficiencies to save money, for example the Library has altered heating times, increased their ordering of paperbacks rather than hardbacks where possible and they are also attempting to generate more media coverage in an attempt to reduce advertising costs. Staff training has been reviewed and where possible in-house training has been encouraged, this has led to significant savings. Schools and other service areas are able to take advantage of corporate contracts for purchasing of goods and services and it is hoped that the scope of these savings will increase during the course of 2007.

It should be noted however that additional costs of utilities, for example, which the department has estimated will cost in the region of £250,000, will also have to be found from within existing resources. No additional funding has been allocated to schools or service areas to compensate for these additional costs.

With relatively small budgets for non-staff costs, most areas of the service have limited scope for achieving further efficiency savings over those already identified. Staff costs represent over 83 per cent of the department's gross budget excluding transfer payments (student grants and grants to other organisations).