

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR TREASURY AND RESOURCES
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 30th NOVEMBER 2020**

Question

“Will the Minister advise –

- (a) what plans, if any, she has to use additional resources to top up the Spend Local cards; and
- (b) what the mechanism is for making a decision to top up the cards?”

Answer

An evaluation of the Spend Local cards is being conducted jointly by officials from the Economics Unit, Treasury, and the Customer and Local Services Department. Following the completion of that evaluation Ministers will give consideration to the merits of repeating the initiative. The Government already has in place an ambitious fiscal stimulus programme, which includes the recently approved £50 million Fiscal Stimulus Fund, and a temporary reduction in the rate of employees’ Social Security contributions that is estimated to provide an additional £26 million in stimulus. Any decision to top-up cards would take into consideration the availability of these initiatives and other measures such as the Co-Funded Payroll Scheme that are designed to support workers and businesses that continue to be impacted by public health restrictions.

No specific funding is allocated in the Government Plan for topping up the Spend Local cards so a decision to do so would require the use of funding held in the Covid-19 Response Head of Expenditure for the Economic Recovery or, if that was not available, an allocation from the Covid-19 Reserve.

The process for allocating Economic Recovery funding has been outlined to the relevant Scrutiny Panel. An allocation from the Covid-19 Reserve would require a business case, the approval of which would be subject to the investment appraisal process. The current investment appraisal process is set out in R.80/2020 Procedures for Allocations from the Reserve.