



Education & Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture

MONDAY, 31st MARCH 2014

Panel:

Connétable S.W. Pallett of Sr. Brelade (Chairman)
Connétable M.P.S. Le Troquer of St. Martin (Vice Chairman)
Connétable S.A. Rennard of St. Saviour

Witnesses:

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture
Director, Education, Sport and Culture
Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure

[10:06]

Connétable S.W. Pallett of St. Brelade (Chairman):

Good morning all. I want to remind everybody about electronic devices. If they are on, can you have them on silent? Obviously no eating if we can help it and drinking just what is on the table. For the benefit of the tape if we could just go round and identify ourselves for the tape. I am Constable Steve Pallett, Chairman of the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

Connétable M.P.S. Le Troquer of St. Martin:

Constable Michel Le Troquer, St. Martin.

Connétable S.A. Rennard of St. Saviour:

Constable Sadie Rennard of St. Saviour.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Deputy Patrick Ryan, Minister, Education, Sport and Culture.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Mario Lundy, Director of Education and Culture.

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Derek De La Haye, Head of Sport and Youth.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I thought where we would start this morning because I think it will lead us into a few different areas which I think could be quite useful is obviously we had a press release a little while ago regarding underspends - 2013 underspends. I just would like to go through some of them and maybe give us some comments on what they are going to be used for and why. You have a sum of £3 million, or nearly £4 million, of underspends that you obviously have been given for other projects. Obviously we have some questions around one or 2 of them, but do you want to give us just a brief overview of what your plans are for that money?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I do not have the detail in front of me because obviously as you can imagine for a department of this size there is quite a lot of detail that goes behind it. But what I can say is that pretty much all of our underspends are fully committed for next year. If you want to ask specific questions around some of them I believe that the officers here could answer you and give you the detail.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

It is an interesting one. There are 4 or 5 subjects in here which we would like to go through. One I have not heard before, and it sounds very exciting, is the collaborative arts project with St. Malo. Do you have any details on that?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

That will not be a major expenditure. I do not have the details on that with me. I mean, I do not have a breakdown of the underspends with me, but I can tell you that the biggest portions of the underspend relate to schools and to higher education. You may be aware that we operate a scheme of delegated financial management so that the money goes out to the schools and the

school year is different from the financial year. So the school year is from September to July; the financial year is from January to December. So schools are allowed to carry over balances in order to manage the difference between the financial year and the school year. So for example, if a school has increased its staffing or knows that it is going to increase its staffing, it is too late for it to do it in January. It will have to do it from September. So the school needs to make sure that it has funding available to be able to do that. A significant proportion of the schools' underspend will be in the fee-paying colleges because, of course, some of that funding will be money that is coming from fees from parents. So essentially when the parents pay their fees towards those schools it goes through the States accounts. So that money would be in the schools. The school underspends a significant part of it. Then higher education, you know, where the significant amount of money going each year for approximately 1,400 students in higher education. But it fluctuates. It needs to fluctuate because it is dependent on a number of factors: (a) the number of students who go in any one year; (b) the courses that they study because some courses are more expensive than others, particularly sciences, medicine; and (c) the income of the parents, because in any one year it will be the income of the parents that determines the amount of grant that we will provide for students. So you find that we carry over the higher education money to help flatten our aid and we do not use that for any other purposes. It is not a question of: "You know you have X million at the end of the year and higher education needs to use it for something else." My view is that if you have an underspend in that current year you might have an over spend in the subsequent year.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Have the changes for higher education fees already kicked in?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, but they are ready to change again in England. At the moment for an average course it is about £9,000 in tuition fees and that has been frozen by the English Government for a few years now. The question is whether or not they will release the cap on that, and if they do, how much latitude they will give universities, because for every £1,000 the fees in England go up by it costs us about £1.4 million.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Obviously I like the underspends that you are going to support the higher education tuition fees. Is it costing you more than you thought it would cost you? Is that why you are having to support it through the underspend?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

No. It is costing us about as much as we predicted. The question will be whether or not that will be enough if the cap is taken up. So, for example, if the U.K. (United Kingdom) Government decided to give universities the latitude to increase the fees by £3,000, that is rather a lot of money for us.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

What negotiations are you having with the universities in the U.K. around these potential increases?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

We do not really have the clout to negotiate with universities in the U.K. like that. Our negotiations in the past led to us getting an arrangement with the universities where most of them would charge us the same as they would charge for an English student. There are only 2 exceptions to that now: Cambridge University and the Imperial College. The others charge us basically what they would.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

That has been a historical approach, that from Cambridge, is it not?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

It has been a historical approach from Imperial College, but no, the Cambridge situation has really only occurred since the U.K. Government changed its policy on higher education funding.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

On the underspend, the cynics among people would say you do a budget to spend so much, but you want that money for something else. Do not spend it on something and then use it later. Is there any answer to that?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, we do not do it. Essentially, you know, the budget is ring fenced. So what I am saying there is if there is a £2 million, for example, underspend in higher education, if you looked back through the books you will not see that £2 million being spent on something else. You will see it being carried forward for higher education. There are some areas where you might have a bit of flexibility, but they would be for far smaller sums of money, where you might have identified what was a priority for that particular year, but some set of circumstances has changed and you may want to invest some of that money in something that suddenly becomes a higher priority. But that is rare. In the Education budget the majority of the money is going out to schools. We do not take

that money back from schools, although when you put it all together it looks like a big sum of money for a small primary school, it is only a few thousand pounds. For a secondary school it might seem a lot more, but it is important that the secondary schools are able to manage their staffing. To give you a good example would be, if you take an 11 to 16 secondary school that has been funded for the year from January, that 11 to 16 secondary school could lose between 12, 14 young people to 30 young people to Hautlieu during the course of that year. Now if 30 young people leave the school and go to Hautlieu, that is 2 members of staff because the school is funded on the number of students. So that school now needs to be able to pay its staff for the following year. So the schools will be very prudent and they will make sure that they have the funding available to pay those members of staff, because obviously you cannot change your staffing in the middle of the year.

[10:15]

You have already started your courses. So that is an example of how schools need to manage in the financial environment and the difference between the finance in the academic year.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

As pupils move from school to school, does under funding follow them?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

It does not follow them because the funding is ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Or are they extra funded if ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

If they move from one primary school to another primary school, yes, the funding would follow them essentially the following year. There would be an additional pupil so you would get additional money. But it does not follow them in the sense that they get the same funding if they move from primary to secondary because as you go through the system and you get older, the amount of funding that goes towards your education increases because the cost of doing A-level subjects, for example, is much in excess of the cost of a primary pupil.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

For those who say then putting the money back into the pot, it just would not work.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, it would not, but if you look at any business - I mean, if you take £100 million business, how much would you expect £100 million business to be able to carry forward each year in order to be solvent and fluid and be able to manage its pressures in the financial year? I do not think ... it is important to be able to carry forward money because carry forward money, and this is from my perspective as an accounting officer, takes away any temptation that there might be to spend up all your money before the end of the year and it also means that you can plan more prudently. So if there is something that you need, for example in a school there might be a big one-off purchase but you do not have enough money for it, you could say: "Well, over the next 2 years I am going to put this amount aside in order to be able to make that purchase." So I think carried forwards lead to more prudent spending.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

One of the other areas that you are using the underspends for is for the adaptations to the curriculum. Is this around the adopt and adapt in the new curriculum moving forward?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. It will be essentially around training and the development of materials for schools, we are working with schools.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Do you think we are taking the right approach in terms of giving enough flexibility to our curriculum moving forward? Because obviously some areas of the U.K. have moved to a more independent approach, moving away from ... certainly Wales have taken their own approach to the curriculum. I think Guernsey is going down a different route as well.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

You are moving on to a different area now I think, Constable, are you not, which is rather than the carry forwards I think you are talking specifically about the right or wrongs of our approach to education.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Well, I am looking forward at the adaptation to the curriculum, adopt and adapt which I presume is based around changes in the curriculum that allow us to adapt to an approach that is more suitable to Jersey.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Guernsey are consulting on it; they have not decided which route they are going to take as yet. There have been a number of curricula reforms over the past 15 years. The approach that we tended to take is to watch what happens in England and lag slightly behind, and to do the things that seem to work and not to do the things that do not seem to work. Our young people mostly attend universities in England. The universities expect them to have A-levels, although we also have the International Baccalaureate and they do receive students from Scotland. But for the most part A-levels are the currency that you would use to get yourself into a university. The English curriculum, while it is a statutory curriculum for most schools in England, the Government has also decided to give the new academies the flexibility to choose whether or not they follow it. We can give our schools as much flexibility as we believe is in their best interest. But we also make modifications - traditionally we have made modifications to the English curriculum to suit our needs. So for example, until this new curriculum, modern foreign languages were not compulsory in primary school; but modern foreign language as French is compulsory in primary school from key stage 2, and has been in Jersey for some time. We have always made modifications to the geography curriculum and the history curriculum because we want to make sure that it reflects the history of the Island and the geography of the Island. So we have the flexibility to be able to do that, and it is less of an issue, less of a concern at primary level where we can give additional flexibility to the schools. But of course the key thing in secondary is basically the examination syllabus for any particular subject. So our young people have been able to enter the Welsh Board examinations. I am not aware that we have ever used the Northern Ireland Board, but schools have the flexibility to determine the examination board that they think best meets the needs of their particular students. So the difference between the 2 examination boards and the sets of examinations at the moment is that a significant proportion of the Welsh Board will be course work. So certain students will feel that that is a better approach for them. The English approach now is going to be more linear. It is a bit more traditional in that you study your course and at the end of the course you sit the examination. So on the one hand you have course work and modules that you can take over 2 years and on the other hand you have study for 2 years and you sit down and you take the final examination. Our schools do have the flexibility to choose each of those examination boards, but in general terms we have decided to stick with the English curriculum because that is the one we are most familiar with and we can manage the changes that will be brought in effectively.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Are there specific subjects that in terms of any changes and the way you are adapting those changes that you are going to look at first?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

There are some. It is not so much changes to the curriculum or to the examinations, but to the way that they are counted in what are essentially the league tables in England. For example, with the new English Baccalaureate which is essentially a set of subjects that the English Government expects students to study, our young people will still study those subjects. But whether the subjects that England identifies as the subjects that it wants to count as the highest priority, we could take a different approach to that. That is important when it comes to the balance between academic subjects and vocational subjects, because the English reforms are about trying to re-establish the importance of a rigorous academic curriculum and of course what we are trying to do here is to have a good balance between an academic curriculum and a vocational curriculum. So the changes in the U.K. may have an impact on where we would sit in any of the league tables, but it does not have to have an impact on what we think is the most important or the most important elements of a good curriculum. So we want to say: "Well, it is going to be English, mathematics, modern foreign language, but you can count 3 vocational subjects in there as well." That could be our Jersey Baccalaureate for want of a better word. But the English Baccalaureate can make it something else. I think that is important because we have some data now; we have an analysis over the last couple of years about the effectiveness of our schools compared to schools in England and as you will know, this has been in the media for about 2 or 3 years. If I give you a good example, last year 81 per cent of the subjects taken at G.C.S.E. (General Certificate of Secondary Education) in England were at A* to C, compared to 71 per cent in Jersey - so a 10 per cent difference. We have done some analysis to see why that is the case, and what is happening there. When we look at it, our English results are exactly the same as England. Our maths results are exactly the same as England. Our science results are exactly the same. In fact, when you go right down the subjects there are only 3 subjects where England outperforms us. We are either the same or we outperform them. Those subjects are religious education; I think it is geography and one of the smaller core sciences. So you have to ask the question: if we are as good or better, if our results are as good or better than the English results in virtually every subject, how come they got 81 per cent and we got 71 per cent? What we discovered was that in about 2010 there were something like 1,300 plus vocational G.C.S.E.s that schools were using that counted as equivalents to G.C.S.E.s in order to boost their league tables. But what we also discovered from the Woolf Review in England that only 4 per cent of those subjects were up to a G.C.S.E. standard; that about 96 per cent of those subjects did not make the standard. So we know that that is why the English results look more favourable than ours do. But in fact we think that our curriculum ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

But ours are comparable if not better.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, we think ours are more rigorous.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

But how can you show that?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Can I just interject there for a minute? This information that the Director is talking about is literally hot off the press. It is only probably 2 weeks ago that we had the results of this analysis, and we are still to a degree assimilating this research that we have done. What I might suggest is that we have a separate meeting with the Scrutiny Panel, just around that area to share that research which is very detailed and quite complex.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

More than happy to.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

We need to go into quite a lot more detail. To do it kind of off the hoof at this meeting probably is not a good idea, because ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Probably needs an hour on its own.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is. It is a whole specialist subject on its own and I think you would benefit from, might I say, that. It is an important subject and we want you to be very clear on what we discovered.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I had a brief conversation with the Director about it before and I think it is something that we do need to have a good understanding of, and I think it is something that the public need to have an understanding of as well.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, indeed. It is crucial. Just to kind of conclude on the question of adopting and adapting the English curriculum, there is a news release on 24th March. I think probably I could do worse than read out the key statement in it really for me, which is that the U.K. Secretary of State Michael Grove, introducing change quickly. Once he has made the decision to make the changes, he is introducing it very quickly.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Is this for September 2014?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

This is for September ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

This year?

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

It is this September.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is really just September 2014, yes, for examinations in the following year. We have been consulting and thinking about this for some 2 years now, because it has been being consulted on, these changes, for about that period of time in the U.K. But the decision was not made, and there was a degree of, shall we say political uncertainty whether Labour would change it in any way, and the whole question of education in the U.K. is somewhat of a political football. It has been knocked about between the various political parties in the U.K. for almost as long as probably all of us can remember. So these changes were mooted, but it was not clear that they were going to happen until probably 9 months to a year ago - I am guessing a little bit; do not quote me on that. So we then had to make a decision fairly quickly and we needed to respond decisively and in a way that minimises disruption and ensures that the children are not disadvantaged in any way through examinations and the qualifications that they will lead to. So we have decided - this is finally what we have decided to do, is to adopt once again the English curriculum and to adapt it to suit local conditions in whichever way, with consultation through the Curriculum Council, that we feel is appropriate for Jersey. I know that there has been some recent publicity about Guernsey, for example, consulting on a different form. What I would say about that is that moving to the Scottish system is not really feasible in our opinion, and that is because it would require an extra year in the primary schools.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Can you explain that?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, the Scottish system does have an extra year in front; that is it. It is as simple as that. That is how the Scottish system works. It would require a complete restructure of our system. We simply do not have the time to do that. It is not viable.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Too disruptive?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Too disruptive and it is not viable in the short time scales that we have. That is really it as far as ...

The Connétable of St. Martin:

How much extra work is created for the teachers? We are talking about the pupils and the exams.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is creating some extra work for teachers. There is a lot of training. In fact the Director has talked to you about it - some of the carry forwards will be used for retraining and recalibrating, is perhaps the best way that I can describe the teaching. The exams are more linear than they used to be. By linear I mean that there will be more emphasis placed on the final exam than on course works throughout the year, and there are various other changes. So there is quite a lot of change that the teachers have to cope with.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Out of your scope?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Training obviously costs and, as I say, the Director has been through that. That is part of the cost involved.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Do you think not taking the course work into consideration is fair, because not everybody can do exams? People tend to panic sometimes when they have an exam where with their course work through the years they are quite happy and they are quite relaxed.

[10:30]

Once they get an exam paper in front of them, they tend to panic. So do you not think that course work should be brought into it, or are you quite happy with the final exams being the be-all and end-all?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I do not think we have much choice, as I have said, but our students are going to have to go through those final exams either way.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Why do we not have any choice? Because you are going with the British?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

If we are adopting the English curriculum and bear in mind, do not forget, that the students have to get those exams in order to get access to A-levels and to get A-levels which then will carry on into access to U.K. universities.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

So the youngsters in Guernsey who are going with the Scottish thing are going to be slightly penalised because they will not have the same curriculum as ours. They will not be able to go to university or they will not be able to do their A-levels?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I do not think I really want to make any comment other than we do not believe it is viable to make the change to the Scottish system in the timescale.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

You think that exams are going to be vital. Even if a child does panic their course work is not going to be taken into consideration.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Children will have to pass these same exams, the exams that the English curriculum has. I do not really have a choice other than to make sure that the children are not disadvantaged in any way.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

There are 2 things here at play. First of all there is the curriculum; and then there are the examination syllabuses. At G.C.S.E. level the Welsh Board will retain some of the arrangements that they have at the moment for course work. There is nothing to stop our young people from being entered into Welsh Board examinations and to having a course work approach if it is

available. The schools will make that decision based on their student cohorts. In any student cohort you do have young people who do very well at course work who do not do well at examinations. But you also have young people who do very well at final examinations.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Well, anybody can learn anything.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Interestingly there is some - though I cannot remember where it comes from now - but there is some research that suggests that some boys benefit from the end of year examination whereas girls tend to enjoy the course work approach. But quite simply, the schools know the students and the schools will know what the best approach is for their students. Regardless of the curriculum, the examination syllabus that they follow will still be down to the school. There is also, some of the examinations are modular. So for example, you can take part of the examination in mathematics a year early and you build up your credits. U.K. Government has changed in that schools were able to enter students for modules 2 or 3 times in order so the student could get the best result. Now the Secretary for State in England says that only the first result will count towards the league tables in England. But Jersey does not have to do that. As long as it is comfortable that its league tables, if you want to have league tables, that the data that you use for those league tables is down to whatever we want for the young people. You can have whatever examination result you want counted in there. So we are not really constrained by some of the things that have been introduced in England because some of those measurements are about league tables which have traditionally been less important in Jersey. It does not stop you doing the best thing for the student.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

But by staying with the English curriculum and the English examinations in terms of feeding on into the universities, does that give our students an advantage if we stay within the English curriculum?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

The majority of our students go to universities in England and I would not say that it was an advantage in the sense that with the International Baccalaureate they would still be able to apply for universities and if they did do the Scottish exams again they would still be able to apply for universities. It is really ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Even though those examinations are different.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Even though examinations are different. It is that level 3 standard that universities are looking for which is the equivalent of A-levels and they want to make sure that the student has reached that standard before they would gain entrance to the university.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Can I ask you a more general question? This is all coming on to some of the reviews that you are carrying out. I am aware that you are doing it yourself as Director, in terms of a review of the structure of secondary education. Am I not correct?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Could you give us an idea of how that is progressing and when that is likely to be completed by?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, the Director is retiring on 31st August.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

That gives us a clue, then.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

We are collecting data for it at the moment. We have a lot of data but we are bringing that together to date and then it is a question of pulling it all together and presenting that after. You are probably looking at around the end of June.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Is that done by the new Director or an outside agency?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

It is being done by me.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

From a timing point of view obviously you do need to look at the curriculum for September 2014. But if your review of the structure of secondary education says one thing and yet you have gone down another route with the adoption of that scheme, is there any conflict there or is your review in more general terms than that?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

I think the review may not be the best word. It is sort of a state of the nation report from an outgoing Director.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Where we are.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

It is where we are and some of the challenges that the service will face in the future. It is really a political decision after that as to whether or not the education structure needs revising and changing.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Is that the system that we currently run?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

That is right. It is not for me to suggest an alternative structure, but simply to point out the issues with the current structure, the things that we would need to consider if we were going to make that better. So the issues will be around the quality of opportunity - we know about that now - and the highly selective nature of the system. These are issues that have an impact on the performance of the system and an impact on the opportunities that young people get.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Will that also be looking at sixth form education and current structures?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, that would all be covered from within it, yes. But your question was: "Will going with the English curriculum have an impact on that?" Not necessarily because the exams will be the exams. They will be there whatever your structure will be. The students will still take them.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Okay, staying with schools, obviously we would all hope that work is progressing in terms of preparation for Les Quennevais School. I think it is at the feasibility study stage at the moment. Could you tell us whether the fundings have been available for that and, if so, how far you have got with it and how it is progressing?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

The funding is in place for it. Property Holdings are progressing. It is obviously quite a large and detailed piece of work. They are not just looking at one side. They are looking at 2 or 3 possibilities and we are hoping that towards the end of June, we will have those results and will be in a position to make up our minds on what finally our preferred option is.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

In the meantime, are the pupils, not suffering, but is it affecting the current pupils at Les Quennevais School? They do not get a second chance, do they?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, Les Quennevais School has been working under its current, shall we say, circumstances both in terms of its teachers and its facilities now for quite some time. So, in some ways, it is business as usual for Les Quennevais School, as you would expect. The current children that are there have to pass exams and have a good education and not suffer so we are doing our best to minimise anything but there is no doubt that a new Les Quennevais School will make a significant difference to the quality of learning opportunities. Otherwise, we would not be doing it. The 2 are, I suppose, inextricably interlinked. But I suppose it is also true to say that with the facilities they have, it inherently has some inefficiencies as far as the costs are concerned of running that and the costs of maintenance, for example, for the school on an old building. The costs of probably having some extra teachers, for example, might be there in order to help supervise the children in their break periods or when they need to move around the school. It is quite difficult because of practical difficulties like the size of the classrooms, like the ease of moving between spaces is difficult in Les Quennevais because the school was designed for the number of children that it was which is approximately, give or take a little bit, half of the number of children that are there now. That was why I made the decision that enough was enough and it was at one time when I first came into office, it was suggested that there would be a refurbishment at the school. It rapidly became clear that, certainly in my opinion - and I will be quite honest about it - this was rather like if I was in the private sector, which I have been used to for years and years and years, this would be throwing good money after bad. There comes a point in time where you have to say: "Enough is enough. We need a new school." I made that decision quite firmly as soon as I had the chance to look at Les Quennevais School and that is what I did. Inevitably, therefore, there is an interim period of time. I cannot say that there is not. I am afraid that is the reality of life. Let me say this. I think the teachers do a fantastic job at Les Quennevais in spite of the conditions they have. I have made that statement several times and I will say it again. They do a fantastic job in spite of some of the difficulties with the facilities that they currently have and we do our best in the department to help them. We provide the budgets to enable them to have temporary classrooms,

for example, and all of the other things that we need to do to assist the school to be as successful as it undoubtedly still is and continues to be.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

What is the actual physical nature of the feasibility study? Is it purely looking at one site or is it looking at several sites getting to the view that there is a preferred site?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

We started with this feasibility study by looking at those sites that were within States ownership so that includes various things in the west of the Island; others schools. It looked at other States owned sites. For example, there are a lot of sports facilities around and playing fields around and, as you know, there is the Les Quennevais playing field so we looked at all of those areas. It also looked at the feasibility initially of rebuilding the school on the existing site. I have to say that very, very rapidly, we came to the conclusion, for all sorts of reasons that I think are no more than common sense, that that was the least attractive of all of the options. What do you do with 800 odd children on a small site?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I think decanting pupils in and out from one school into another is not the preferred option.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I came to the conclusion - and I think I am fully supported by anybody who looks at it with some measure of reasonable understanding - that to try to rebuild a school of that size on a site which is already probably, I do not know, less than half of the actual size of the footprint that the school needs to be for the site and the number of children - do not quote me on that because I have to check the figures but which is certainly considerably a very small and very cramped site already - was just, I am afraid, a nonstarter.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

It needs to be a west of Island school, that there is no doubt about, but does it have to be at Les Quennevais? Are we looking at any other sites?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, I think it has to be close to where the majority of the students inevitably will live and that is the main area for that. We have topographical maps which show where the students live and it is quite clear that all of the dots are concentrated in the Les Quennevais area or the vast majority of the dots. You can see it visually on the wall.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So the feasibility study will take in transport and all the other issues around ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

All the things. Yes, public transport access and whether it is on cycle routes; the congestion that would possibly be around the school at points in the day; the sports facilities; the ease of access for the children to carry out outside of school activities; a whole range of everything you would expect.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I do not want to prejudge ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Also, in a school of this size, there will need to be a very, very detailed environmental impact assessment for the school which I suppose will cover all of these things we have been talking about.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

This will be a large public consultation?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

This will be a very, very large public consultation and it has always been the case. It would be inconceivable to think that it would not be.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Will that consultation be implemented around the planning application? Do you think that is ...?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

No, I think the planning application has certain statutory consultation exercises embedded in it but quite separately from that, the department will carry out a much ... I hesitate to say "bigger" but certainly perhaps a less formal consultation more connected with the community kind of consultation except it will be targeted. We will be proactively targeting the consultation with different parts of the west of Island communities.

[10:45]

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So that is your next stage? After the feasibility study, that is the next stage?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, I am not absolutely clear what the consultation exercise would be in the planning process because I am not the Minister for Planning and it is not my specialist subject, I am sorry, but it is not. But what is my specialist subject is education and I know that the parents and the community and everybody in the west of the Island that has an interest that is a stakeholder in this will need to be very, very carefully brought up to speed with all the thought processes that have gone into this, all the research and all of the conclusions that we have come to.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Looking at the west of the Island - and I accept what you are saying and I am sure those are the intentions - are you getting any pressure from the Council of Ministers because what happens to the site at the existing school? We have seen this happen with the police station that we had to have the police station moved because we needed more housing. What will happen to Les Quennevais School?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, States policy is if and when we build a new school and all of the students move into it, everybody is very happy, hopefully, and off it goes into the sunset, then we will have vacated an existing education site. If we, as the Education Department, wish to make a ... it has to go automatically back to the States Property Holdings who own all of the property in the States portfolio including all of the schools. But if we wanted to keep it for any purpose, we would have to make out I think a very, very strong case. Having built a new school on a new site, we would have to make out an extraordinarily strong case for keeping it, I do not know, for some other educational use. I cannot at this stage see - and that is not to say that it might not suddenly appear over the next couple of years - that we would have a really strong case for retaining that in educational use. I cannot somehow see that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So future use is not necessarily a matter for education?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

As far as the Education Department is concerned and as Minister for Education, I do not have a view on what it should be used for following a new Les Quennevais School. Of course, as a separate States Member, I might have a view, and I am sure most States Members will have a view.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Well, the public could say that we are losing a green field to a new school in which there is no way the States would be able to build homes on but if we put a school, we are more likely to get a new school on a green zone site and then we gain more land as they have done for the new housing.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, the problem with building a new secondary school on any new site frankly anywhere in the Island is that there are very, very few sites that are available, if any, already in public ownership because you need a relatively large area and, as we know, land is everything in this Island. So you do need a relatively large area of land. Okay, you could knock other things down and clear the site that way but that is fraught with difficulty and it certainly might be fraught with compulsory purchase issues. That could go on and on and on, that kind of debate, could it not, for years, one would expect? We have located certainly one site not in public ownership. I think that is well-known in the west of the Island and where it is. We have not finally decided yet that that is our preferred option. It would be wrong for me to make that kind of statement until Property Holdings have done their job and we have a properly evidenced rationale for coming to that conclusion. But it is hard to find sites so that is the difficulty in a nutshell.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I am going to move on and I have one last question on this. Obviously, if we are going to build a new school in the west of the Island, has there any consideration been given - and I am just thinking from a transport point of view of transporting children from one side of the Island to the other - of having a sixth form facility within that school?

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

The Constable of St. Saviour is very happy with that.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Yes, and it would help T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) and the people who are transporting the children from one part of the Island to the other to relax too.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think there are a lot of implications to what you are suggesting that the Minister for Transport and Technical Services and the Minister for Planning and Environment would have a view on.

Fundamentally, that would create lots of vehicle movements that most people in the Island would feel were unnecessary, if I am understanding what you are suggesting correctly.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

I do not know what the Constable of St. Brelade is saying but as far as I am concerned, I think it would be very sensible, being a St. Saviour's Constable, to have a sixth form college at the west of the Island so that the children did not have to transport themselves half the way across the world to attend a school. I do not see how transporting them is going to help the environment when they have just got to go from A to B when they are already in the west of the Island if we are trying to save the planet.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

We are starting to talk about sixth form college.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Yes.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Which is a whole new subject matter.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Yes, well, if you are building a new school, maybe we could consider it.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

In terms of building a new school, obviously there is going to be pros and cons. I can see some of the negatives to it.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

First of all, the case has not finally been made for a sixth form college yet. That is the first thing to be said and I am sure that that, in itself, is a whole new debating area but if one were to assume that it would be a good idea for a sixth form college, it would need to be put in a place where the majority of students would have access. If you take the U.K. as an example, in order to get the range of subjects into a sixth form college, you would need probably - I do not know but I am guessing a little bit - shall we say 75 per cent to 80 per cent of all sixth form students to attend that college in order to give it the kind of pupil size that would justify the range of subjects that that sixth form would need to offer. One of the problems that we have is that with 5 sixth form providers separately at the moment, although there is a degree of co-operation between them, it involves moving students around 5 different sites to get any kind of co-operation and none of them can

really provide the bandwidth of choice of A-Level subjects that are available to their equivalent students in the United Kingdom. You simply cannot do it because of the size of our education system as a whole is relatively small.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So it is not in but it is not out.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Could I just seek clarification because I think there is a bit of a terminology issue? I think what you are suggesting is that a sixth form becomes part of Les Quennevais School so they come to an 11 to 18 school and not an Island sixth form.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Correct.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

So we are not talking about a sixth form college.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Because I have spoken to some students that have been at Les Quennevais and obviously one of the disappointing aspects they have is they have to leave at 16 to go to a school on the other side of the Island, lose those friendships they have made over a period of time and also lose contact with the school that is going to be replaced. It is really whether we can build something that that incorporates.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, you would then move from 5 sixth form providers to 6 sixth form providers so you would be limiting the overall choice. The cohort of sixth form from Les Quennevais alone would not do.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

All these subjects could not be moved to one sixth form and then they could all go from this end of the Island to the other end of the Island where the facilities were new, purpose-built and they would have all the curriculum that they desired.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

So you would have to move everybody who lives in St. Martin and St. Grouville to Les Quennevais?

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Well, they move everybody from Les Quennevais down to me anyway now. Where is the difference? But at least they would all be in the one area and all the facilities would be in one collection.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, the difference is simply that there would be a lot more students that would have to move from St. Helier and the east of the Island going west.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

And St. Saviour.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

And St. Saviour going west than there would be for the relatively - still a significant number, I give you that - smaller numbers that would need to move from the west to the centre which is effectively where the sixth form college potentially might be.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

It is a consideration ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

I cannot tell you whether it is a political consideration or not but I can advise you on the impact of it. If you have - and you do have - just over 1,000 students in sixth forms with 5 providers and you now have 6 providers, you will not be delivering a very efficient sixth form provision for students.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

You will be reducing the provision you had at the prior school.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, you might be but you will also be reducing the capacity of those schools to provide a broad curriculum so it is a fact.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

They might not be viable in themselves if you ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, they will not be able to offer the same breadth of opportunity that they currently offer because the number of students would reduce. So if you have 6 providers for 1,000 students, then each of

those providers - unless you are prepared to seriously overfund it - would be trying to offer a breadth of opportunity so a breadth of subjects and that would be quite costly.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

But it could have an impact on the fee paying schools.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

There is one further element to this which I think has probably not come out yet and that is this. Alongside a sixth form college, the most advantageous model would be to also have your higher education tertiary college in very, very close proximity so they are tied for all sorts of reasons of movements and pathways between the 2 institutions.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Moving on because Derek has been very quiet this morning.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

When I say “pathways between the 2 institutions”, I am not talking about a young person walking down to ...

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Walking from one to the other.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I am talking about the academic and the access to course materials pathways; movements between the 2.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Okay, we are going to move on to my favourite subject; a 50-metre pool feasibility study. There was a talk of a feasibility study and whether there was funding available for that. Could you give us any idea whether that has been considered and whether money is available?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

We are considering the viability of a 50-metre pool but there are lots of, shall we say, other departmental possible interest in this or not, as the case may be. For example, Economic Development. One of the cases for a 50-metre pool is that it would attract events to the Island. That is not our remit. That is the remit of the Economic Development Department. The Jersey Amateur Swimming Association put forward a report which suggested that the AquaSplash could

be changed from what it currently is into 2 25-metre pools with a pool in the centre. I do not think it could be even termed as a feasibility study. It was an idea.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

There were firm proposals but they were ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It was an idea that someone had and we do not have the funding to carry out a full feasibility study on that at the moment and I think it is true to say that when we consulted on this with the sports community generally, it was more that their focus was a dedicated learn to swim pool rather than the sort of high level pool. Obviously, the Jersey Amateur Swimming Association is highly respected and been around for a long time and it does take children for learning to swim but its focus is also on competition. The Fort Regent Steering Group Working Party is also still considering sites at Fort Regent so it would seem a bit premature to start doing too much work on it until they have finally concluded what they want to do.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I sort of agree with you in terms of the Fort Regent side of it but in terms of the AquaSplash - and you say that there is no money available for a feasibility study in 2 proposals put forward by the Amateur Swimming Association - they had offered a group that could have done that feasibility study, KPMG.

[11:00]

In terms of timing, obviously the lease on the AquaSplash or the re-leasing of that is up for renegotiation at the end of the year. Are you saying that that will go ahead now and there will not be any review of pool facilities at AquaSplash prior to that lease being signed?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Discussions are opening with AquaSplash on the next 5-year period which will be from 2015 to 2019 so there is time yet but I think there are so many difficulties with this that are not yet being bottomed out. For example, how viable would a 50-metre swimming pool be? Okay, it is inspirational. I am sure that all of us would aspire to a lovely 50-metre pool to compete with the best that there is or the other 10 that there are in the whole of the rest of the United Kingdom.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I think what was being put forward, to be fair to the group - and I have had no personal contact with that group other than an independent report proposal by a group from the Amateur Swimming

Association - you are right. It is a 50-metre pool in essence but it is 2 25-metre pools which would give us that extra teaching facility we have been talking about.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, I understand that but, nevertheless, it is a 50-metre pool and the building of a 50-metre pool is a lot more expensive than building a 25-metre pool.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Well, it is if the building is not there but the building is there.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

All we need is a big hole in the ground and then simplifying it.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is and if you would not mind me saying I think it is somewhat oversimplifying it because you would have to completely rebuild. It is not so much the building shell which costs the money. I think it is more likely to be all of the infrastructure inside the building for a 50-metre pool that might be a major part of the cost of a swimming pool. You have got all of the other things to think about like how do you man it? What do you have to do in terms of manning it? You have to think about the other facilities that exist at the AquaSplash and all of the people that are currently using it. I am not just talking about swimming clubs now. I am talking about leisure facilities and the flumes and those other things and the children's parties and goodness knows what else.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Because there are arguments now that it is a pretty poor use of space. It is a huge building.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Yes, there is a lot of waste.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I am sure there are discussions either way but that does not mean to say that those arguments can just kind of wipe out that area of consideration and sweep it aside.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

No.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think that this is an interesting concept. It does warrant - as I have already said I will do - a small amount of time being dedicated to consider it and see whether it is an option. We would naturally have to talk to other stakeholders in this and, not least, would be the Fort Regent Working Party.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Where have you got with the negotiations with Serco regarding the pool?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It has not started yet.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Could I just go back to where we were originally?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Could I just handover to Derek?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Could I just add something to that? The Minister is correct that they have not started but we have the first meetings with the Treasury Department because they are the people with the responsibility there. With AquaSplash, Serco, we know, are keen to begin those discussions because, clearly, the current period ends at the end of this year and we believe that it is fair to be talking to them at this stage so we intend to be undertaking those discussions fairly soon. I think there are a couple of issues that I would add to that because there is a little bit of uncertainty around what the Jersey Amateur Swimming Association were saying within the report because while suggesting that we should look at a 50-metre pool, aligned to that was they suggested that we close down some other facilities at the same time. Clearly, there are significant implications about doing that if, indeed, we did go down that route. Particularly, there are 2; one at Haute Vallée and also at Langford.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

But to be fair, I think they really wanted to see AquaSplash being a centre of swimming excellence and sporting excellence.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Yes.

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Correct, and they did and I understand what they were saying. So I think there are a couple of things. We will, we think, begin those discussions with Serco fairly soon. We need to do that.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Yes.

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Even if we did come forward with some idea that we should indeed develop a new 50-metre pool in Jersey potentially at the AquaSplash, that is not going to happen immediately. We need to have research about how the pool is going to be operated from 2015 onwards presumably for the next period of 5 years until 2019 and I think we need to be making those decisions fairly soon. So we intend to begin those discussions with Serco because I think that is the right thing to do.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

But any leasing over the next 5-year period could contain break clauses, could contain flexibility within that that if a proposal comes forward, that is something you could work with with Serco. Nobody is saying we are going to rule Serco out of being involved with this. It is more a case of having the option to be more flexible in terms of pool provision.

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

The current contract has a break clause anyway and, clearly, you would not intend to do anything than that and, clearly, within the discussions, we need to consider what might happen in the next 5-year period and be fair to both sides so that there is certainty for Serco to a certain extent. But even as we stand, there is a break clause I think of 6 months where either side could say there needs to be a change for whatever reason.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Nobody makes money running pools, I think. That is pretty clear. Do you think the past record with Serco being value for money for Islanders and the taxpayer?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think that is a political question.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I think it might be.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think that is the kind of political question that needs to be aimed at the Treasury Department who are responsible for the lease.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Could I just ask now, just going back to where we were at Les Quennevais School which is hopefully going to have a purpose-built school, at the moment the swimming pool is used a lot and we have just had the swimarathon and it was fantastic. Are we going to have a new swimming pool facility, are they going to keep the old facility or are we going to have this new facility swimming pool? If we are, can we not have a 50-metre one up there?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think a lot of the same arguments apply to wherever you put a 50-metre swimming pool, to be honest; average viability.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

But are we going to have a swimming pool at Les Quennevais?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well there is an existing one there and it is working.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Yes, but if it has to go back to Housing ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

No, that will not be affected.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

That will not be affected? The swimming pool will stay completely separate ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

No, there is no swimming pool in the existing Les Quennevais school.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

No, no. So that will stay completely separate so we will not have a new swimming pool?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

The students from the new Les Quennevais school ...

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Yes, will go down there.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

... will have access to the Les Quennevais swimming facilities as well as the sports facilities.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

Or up there, depending where the school is.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

In fact, one of the things that I think should be pointed out quite clearly is that within the plans for any new Les Quennevais School certainly we would hope that there will be lots of opportunities for enhancement to the community access to all of the sports facilities that will come as a result. So I think there are lots of spin-off advantages in the new Les Quennevais School for the community and the rest of the Island. Lots of spin-off advantages.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

It is an interesting point the Connétable of St. Saviour makes because we are just about to refurbish Les Quennevais sports pool but it has a limited life on it. This might be the last refurbishment of that particular pool. Most people say 25 years for a pool is pretty good going. I think we will be pretty well up to that if we do another 5 or 6 years.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well that is operational, it is not with us.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Will that be part of the thinking in terms of pool provision as we move forward?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

First of all, if I can answer the bit about the refurbishment; we are undertaking that, as you would be aware, in the summer period. Normally there is a recommendation that you do that between 5 and 7 years and we are keeping that. We do not envisage that the life of the pool is coming toward its end at this stage. It has been well maintained and we continue to do that. So we see that as being viable on an ongoing basis. Within the future capital programmes going forward, and I am talking beyond 2020, we have begun to identify the need for major refurbishment of the sporting facility. But no detailed work has been done upon it at that stage as to whether that is an existing facility or indeed anywhere else.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Well it is good that you think the pool has a longer life scale than that because I think it is important. Just moving on a little bit to, linked into that, the Fit for Sport strategy. Obviously you have got a pretty extensive swimming programme within that Fit for Sport strategy in certain schools. Have we got enough provision within the current setup to allow for that in terms of pool provision? If so, how is that going to be managed?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

We believe that we have. We are currently doing some work on an audit of how facilities are being used. We believe that there is the capacity within the current pool provision to deal with that. One of the issues we believe is that some of the pool space is not used as well and as efficiently as it should be. So we do not envisage any issue there at all. It is more about the co-ordination, it is more about the transport, overcoming the transport issues that schools face to get to facilities, and the third aspect is to do with what happens when you get to the pool and who is going to teach those young people. It is trying to make sure that we have qualified and competent teachers in the pools at the time when the children are.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Have we got those skills here?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

We have. It is about how we use them. We have a number of people we believe that are capable and prepared to come and do some of that teaching. We have them within our own staff but we would be looking to expand that by using some of the people who are currently qualified within the club community.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So you will involve the swimming clubs in that programme?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

We will involve the swimming clubs in those programmes, yes.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

When did it first become a responsibility of government to provide pools? Because there were not pools when I was a youngster. A government pool.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

No, we were down at Holiday Park.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Why does the Government have to pay millions of pounds to provide pools? We live surrounded by sea.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

That is a political question; I cannot give you the definitive answer to that. All I can say is that because we are surrounded by sea it is not always viable to have swimming in the middle of the winter unless you are particularly hardy. I am not so sure that mums and dads would want their children to be swimming in the sea in December and January, or February for that matter. It was felt to be, I presume, politically, a desirable thing for an Island community such as ours for children to be able to swim. In fact, we are making a lot of effort to improve that in our current sport strategy.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

It is in the curriculum, Minister, that young people will be able to swim 25 metres by year 4.

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

By the end of Key Stage 2 which is in the National ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Prior to it but is that in the English curriculum? Probably not.

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Is it? In the English curriculum?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Potentially the Government would have put swimming pools in schools. Traditionally when I say "the Government" I mean in England and that is what has happened in Jersey. When it comes to a major swimming pool for the population, swimming pools do not tend to make money. Public swimming pools tend to run at a loss so governments have tended to subsidise that.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

The difference in funding between a 50 and a 25 metre?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

I think, Minister, it would be probably helpful to point out that the difference has not been catered for. There is no capital set aside for a 50-metre pool; there is no revenue set aside for a 50-metre pool at this time.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

It does not matter whether it is a new or refurbished AquaSplash?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

That is right.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

It is not currently in the M.T.F.P. (Medium-Term Financial Plan)?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

There is no funding in the Medium-Term Capital Plan for that purpose.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Yes. Just getting back to swimming, in terms of delivering that programme, how is that going to be done? I understand there is a co-ordinator that is going to be put in charge of that. Has that position been taken?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

It has just been advertised. The closing date, I think, was in about a week's time. That person will be appointed and then will begin their work as soon as we possibly can depending on that person's notice period.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Is that a short-term appointment or is it going to be full time?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

The funding that is allied to the Fit for the Future strategy is 2-year funding so it is a 2-year post.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Okay. In terms of that provision within other pools, is that going to have any effect on the current active membership? For example, at Les Quennevais I know you want to use the spare capacity, and I presume there is going to be spare capacity at Les Quennevais, will that have any impact on the public using that pool?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

No decisions have been made about that. As I say, we are looking at the audit at the moment and clearly we think they are. Currently swimming lessons take place during public time and generally that means using one lane. Potentially we might look to use more than one lane for those. But clearly we are undertaking that audit and I visit Les Quennevais on a fairly regular basis and take interest at the number of people using 8 lanes.

[11:15]

I have to say that very often it might be a relatively few number of people during the daytime. The fact that somebody might not have their "own lane" I think is something that we need to look at and maybe it will reduce the amount of space for that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

You are bringing tears to my eyes there.

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Constable, I am aware that you use the facility regularly. We have to maximise the space that we have available. I very rarely see the pool crowded, is what I would say.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

In terms of the strategy, it is very early days for the Fit for Sport strategy, but one of the facilities that you are looking to bring forward is the Springfield and the all-weather surface on that. What consultation process have you been through with that? Have you got a costing on that yet?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

The consultation process was twofold really. The first one was the Jersey Football Association undertook a facility strategy as part of the work that we were undertaking as a consultation towards the Fit for the Future strategy. They did that across the whole of the number of facilities they have in Jersey. Really, they brought forward a very comprehensive report and identified the desire to have artificial surfaces in Jersey. Indeed, within that report it identified Springfield as being the most suitable site. As a result of that, that fed into this strategy, we undertook further

consultation around that and we believe that that is the best site. The second part of your question was around the cost. We have got some ballpark figures but clearly we have not gone out to tender at the moment. The process of securing funding from the Football Foundation which is what we are hopeful to do is a little bit of chicken and egg situation because they require us to have planning permission before they will agree to fund, understandably. In order to get to the position that we know exactly how much it is going to be, we would like to undertake a mini tender process. In fact, that is what has just been agreed with the Football Association and the Football Foundation that we are going to begin that process while we are waiting for the planning application to go through the process and hopefully to be agreed.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

You mention you only have a ballpark figure, do you have an idea what the ballpark figure might be?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

We know that artificial turf pitches cost somewhere in the region of £500,000 to £600,000.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

But the benefits of that is it is usable ... I think you put that in the report. The opportunities with an all-weather ...

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

There are lots of numbers that you could put around it but essentially at the moment the pitch gets used for 100 hours a year. There are about 50 football matches, each one taking 2 hours; that brings you to your 100 hours. You could then transfer that into the number of people who use it to being about 1,500 a year if you look at the number of games: 30 people times 50. We fully expect that there will be over 1,000 people each week using the facility, so it is a significant increase, and up to 2,500 hours per year.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Do you see that being used as a multi-sport facility rather than just a football facility in future?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Predominantly it will be for football. We see it as being used by several groups around football. So it would clearly be the Jersey Football Association with some of their activities; it would be the Jersey Football combination and some of their activities. We see the clubs having access to it for training. Clearly, schools will have an opportunity to be using the facility and then I guess, finally, some of the community groups, the groups organised by our community development group, to

have opportunity. So it is a range of different users, predominantly for football. However, I am getting a bit technical now, but the shock pad that is underneath can be of a certain dimension. It will be of a dimension which would allow rugby to be able to take part on that. However, we at the moment do not foresee that it is going to be specifically a rugby pitch where we would put posts, but rather an area that could be used for the training for rugby when it is available to be doing so.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

This is feeding into Island Games a little bit. In terms of spending at the present time, what other money are you spending in terms of upgrading sports facilities in the Island leading up to the Island Games that has got benefits in the Fit for Sport strategy as well?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

The first thing is I break it down in 3 ways really. There is about £4.5 million being inscribed towards capital. The first was already in the capital budget so that is £600,000 and £800,000 for the development of the artificial surface at Les Quennevais and also at the FB Fields.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

That is the athletics track?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

The athletics track. Those 2 projects are underway and will be taking place during this year. You asked about the NatWest Island Games specifically, that is only the FB Fields, the track. The facility at Les Quennevais is predominantly going to become a hockey facility so that is not something to do with the games. So that is the first aspect of it. We have also been fortunate in receiving another £1.5 million in 2014 and £1.5 million in 2015 in capital monies. £250,000 of that in each of those 2 years has boosted our minor capital budget and will be used to do a lot of upgrade work within our facilities. I would call that the smaller projects, so it is around changing rooms, it is about improving those kinds of facilities. The most significant one after that is the Springfield pitch where we have inscribed £300,000 at the moment towards that, depending on what the final figures come out. In addition to the work on the artificial turf pitch at Les Quennevais we will also be resurfacing the tennis courts which are currently operated by Les Mielles Tennis Club and the 4 adjoining courts. The proposal at the moment, and we are looking at the feasibility of it, is to resurface the 4 Les Mielles tennis courts, 2 of the courts adjacent to it but to change the other 2 into ballpark type of facilities. We have not agreed the type of surface but it is likely to be either a carpet or indeed a third generation pitch type of facility.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Are you doing that in partnership with them in terms of funding or is it being purely funded within E.S.C.?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

It is being funded from within E.S.C. from this strategy. It is in line with what we are doing with some of the other clubs, this is the Les Mielles Tennis Club, because once that work has been undertaken we are working with Property Holdings about the lease agreement, the licence agreement that they have got going forward. That agreement will then give them responsibility for ongoing maintenance but also future development on those facilities. So they will have to, as part of the agreement, put a sinking fund into place so that they can demonstrate that they will be able to undertake ongoing development of those things which in part really is the States responsibility.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

If we are putting money into a club like Les Mielles Tennis Club, for example, will there be any agreement for them to develop and move on with their coaching, not just for club members but for a more wider group of Islanders? Maybe teaching younger children, for example, through schools?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Yes. They currently undertake that kind of work anyway but it will be part of the agreement to get them out into predominantly the schools on the west of the Island obviously.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Obviously you mentioned Les Mielles Tennis Club but presumably there are other clubs in other sports as well where they will be receiving some funding from E.S.C. to assist with ... certainly through the Island Games period?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Yes. Some of the other work that is being undertaken as a club is shooting ranges where we are doing 2 things really. The first is, and we have already done this, is to look at the butts at the back to do considerable amounts of work on that to improve them but also to ensure safety. Then the second thing is to put in a network supply which is reliable. At the moment, one or 2 of the clubs rely on generators, or indeed those relying on electricity, they are unable to put on too many appliances at the same time or it goes, tut-tut, and cuts out. So that is happening. One of the other things that we are doing is looking at some of our school sites which could be used by the community. The first one that has been agreed is at D'Auvergne School where the school is moving from a 2 form to a 3 form entry going forward and that funding has been secured

separately. We looked at the provision of outdoor area and believe that if they are able to put an artificial pitch there it is going to considerably increase the amount of use that it will be able to have, particularly during the wet periods. So that is something we are looking to do and are currently seeking planning permission to do and that planning application has gone in. We are also looking at one or 2 of our other school sites to see if we can improve those facilities, not only for the school to increase the amount of use in line with the strategy but also to have some community use as well. But no decisions have been made about those sites at this stage. We are doing the feasibility work at the moment.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I think you mentioned, I am trying to remember because I was thinking of something else you said, in terms of the all-weather surface at Les Quennevais, that is at the end of its life I think, is it not? Is that something you are going to be looking at in terms of replacing? I know that the Hockey Club had ideas revamping what they do there. Is that something you would be doing in partnership with them?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Yes. Again, that is very much in line with what we are trying to do with other clubs. We are going to make it predominantly a hockey facility. Again, it is technical but essentially it is making it a better surface for them rather than a multi-use facility. The Hockey Association are looking at potentially how they could develop their activities by having a club house facility there. Those discussions are ongoing but if that does happen, that is something they would fund. However, going forward, we would very much seek to have a relationship with the association which gives them more responsibility for replacement works going forward. That is in line with what we are doing with several of the sports really. It is reduced in the liability of the States going forward but increasing the ... "ownership" is the wrong word but you understand what I am saying by the "ownership" and the responsibility that the clubs or the sports have for those facilities. We believe that is a model that has benefits for both the sports but also for the States.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So it would be more of a sustainable club for them in terms of what they will be able to do on the site?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

Correct.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Okay. Any other questions on the Island Games? One subject I wanted to get into was ... and this is more general than any specific role. Obviously we have had a new Highlands' principal appointed fairly recently and obviously we know the director is going to be moving on this summer. Both of those roles are being taken by people from outside of the Island. In terms of the department in general, in terms of a succession plan, is that something you are looking at in future in terms of trying to provide those roles from within Island-wide or from outside of?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well the States has a policy, a general policy, on succession planning and career progression is the first thing to say. E.S.C. works to that whenever it can. Just to be ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I am being no way critical of those appointments, they are just ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Sure, I understand. I think what I should point out is that 10 of the most recent head teacher appointments, including Hautlieu and Les Quennevais, 2 of our crucial secondary schools, were successful local applicants. So, also on the primary side we have not had a primary head teacher appointed off-Island for about 20 years. I do not think that is generally known but I think that should be pointed out. Last year we had 5 of those primary head appointments made locally. With 11 to 16 schools though, although, as I said, Hautlieu and Les Quennevais have recruited successful local candidates, 11 to 16 schools are very, very important schools of course. Sometimes an experienced head from off-Island is needed in those schools for the benefit of everyone.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Is that purely because of the issues that sometimes come up with the new schools and so on?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I will let the director answer that.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

When you are looking at a small number of secondary schools then really the people who are going to be applying for headships are usually the deputy heads. So you are talking about a very small pool of people and each will be at different stages in their career in terms of readiness. We have got a good, strong succession planning ethos as the Minister said. We have appointed, I think, 6 primary head teachers last year from on-Island and overall we have appointed, I do not

know, about 10 head teachers. When we appointed the head teacher at Les Quennevais, the head teacher, albeit a local appointment, won that against the national field. So we had advertised the post outside of the Island.

[11:30]

I think it is important potentially with our 11 to 16 schools, with all of our schools, that when we recruit to a headship that candidates are able to demonstrate that they are in fact the best person for the job. That does not mean we do not prepare people locally. We do prepare people locally to compete. Sometimes with some of our schools we want someone who has a lot of experience at headship. So I think we are quite comfortable with the succession planning that we have in place but given the low numbers of applicants locally for secondary headships sometimes, depending on the needs of the school, we will want to see local applicants compete against national applicants. Indeed, that is the case with the upcoming post for Haute Vallée School. We would like to see local applicants compete against national applicants. When it comes to the department, it is slightly different. I think it is partly about the age profile in the department as well. With all due respect to the assistant director, not everybody has seen themselves moving into the director's post at this stage of their career. So it is a question of whether people are interested in the post and working at chief officer level and Jersey can be quite interesting and challenging. You have to want to be able to do that. But head teachers of course might see themselves as preparing for that role but it is very different working as a head teacher in charge of a school, as you know, and having the experience of working in this context, more of a political context than a strategic context. So it is important that, I think, in future if the Island sees head teachers moving into that particular role, we do something additional to prepare those head teachers for it. I was fortunate enough to come into the department as an assistant director at the right age in order to be prepared to compete for the post.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Are there also issues around levels of remuneration when you are coming from a head teacher's role if you are going to be looking to come in at a deputy director, for example, that may put them off going ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, there are differences. The head teacher would probably have to step down to take the risk of being able to step up. So there is something there about the way that transition is managed.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So there is work to be done possibly there in terms of ...?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Certainly, if it is seen as an appropriate progression. Of course, the trend has recently changed, particularly with ministerial government, where if you have a chief officer you would expect them to have some experience in working in a political ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Have you got any questions on that?

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Not on that one.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Okay, I will move on then to a slightly different subject. It would be wrong if I did not mention the Youth Service because it is a very important part of the role that the department plays. Obviously there have been some good news stories recently. But in terms of the spending cuts, and I know they go back 18 months now, do you think there has been any negative impact on the Youth Service compared with those cuts when they did come in or do you think the department managed that well?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

The Youth Service managed that particularly well because it provided them with an opportunity to look at the structure. The Youth Service themselves would say that the structure that they have today which resulted in the loss of a management post is effective and probably more where they would want to have been. So I think structurally they feel that it is quite sound at the moment. But of course financially the Youth Service, what they lost from the C.S.R. (Comprehensive Spending Review), they were able to gain in terms of additional income and sponsorship into the Youth Service. So the financial resources are still there, just coming from a different source.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Can I just make a point at that point though, that a very, very important part of the whole of the *modus operandi* of the Youth Service is around the volunteers. I would just like to publicly put on record our thanks and appreciation of the fantastic work that volunteers provide assisting the Youth Service, whether that is at a Parish level or an Island-wide level. Fantastic. I think that needs to be publicly recognised.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I will echo that because I was at the recent Youth Service annual dinner and it was extremely friendly, enthusiastic ... just a fantastic night all round. But in terms of some of the changes that were made, do you think that ... some of it was difficult. I am involved with a youth club myself. Do you think there were good lessons learnt by the changes that were made? Because I know some staff were moved around and there has been some benefits of that in terms of revitalising. Sometimes a change is as good as a ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Any time we go through a change process inevitably there are lessons to be learned. They never seem to be smooth. In fact, it is often said that if it is smooth you probably are not going through a change process at all. So quite clearly you have got to do as much communication as possible, as much consultation as possible, in order to minimise the uncertainty for people who are going through a change process. There are always lessons to be learned. The outcomes have led to a more efficient and more effective Youth Service and we are very comfortable with it.

The Connétable of St. Saviour:

I would like to say at this stage, although the States withdrew some funding, or they moved it around, the Parishes stepped in when the begging bowl was put because I support Grand Vaux. I used to support Maufant at St. Martin. Now St. Martin has taken over Maufant and we, as a Parish at St. Saviour, help Grand Vaux. They came with the begging bowls to us. Although the States relinquished a lot, the Parishes then stepped in to help the youth of their Parish and vice versa.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

That is great.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think politically speaking that is a brilliant example of co-operation between the States and the Parishes. But I think it would be wrong to say that the Parishes have just stepped in to provide the funding that was cut out of the C.S.R. I think there is a lot more than that that needs to be said which there was not a huge amount of money that was cut from the Youth Service in the C.S.R. It resulted in one management post that disappeared but we have managed that very well within the Youth Service. But now I think what we have ended up with are significant improvements overall to the Youth Service. Whether it is as a result of the C.S.R. I would not like to say but it is always healthy for any organisation to go through a process of looking at what it does and how it does it and whether it does it as efficiently as it can and how it can improve. We have been very fortunate, we have a very proactive leadership team within the Youth Service under Derek and I

think all praise to them, really, including Derek and all the way down. I think the whole exercise has resulted in improvements all round to the Youth Service.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I presume you will be supportive of funding from private funding in youth clubs if it is done in the right way ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Absolutely. I am supportive of any funding from anywhere for anything to do with enhancement.

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

I think it is strength of the Youth Service. I think it is really probably one of the strongest partnership examples of where we work. Clearly the Parishes, and you 3 are representing 3 of those Parishes here today, it does genuinely make one of the strengths. But we have also received partnership funding from other agencies, be they charities, be they corporates, wherever they may be coming from. I think that genuinely is the strength of some of these things. It is not just about, dare I say, the States doing something on behalf of other people. There is some fantastic work going on out there at the cutting edge. I just think there is a great strength personally.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I am trying to think back. I think there were some issues around some funding for the Y.E.S. (Youth Enquiry Service) programme. Is that something that is being dealt with? I can remember reading something not too long ago about that. Is that something that is being dealt with?

Assistant Director, Sport and Leisure:

It is. The management group for Y.E.S. are seeking more funding because the workload is increasing. But we are hopeful that will be successfully concluded.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

But that is almost a victim of their own success situation. They have been so good at what they do that suddenly there is a lot of demand.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Well I was going to move on to a victim of their own success, because I am just wary of the time, and that is Trackers. I will lead this into you, how successful has it been?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Trackers is a star among many stars in the Education Department. I am just trying to find my notes for a second on the actual detail for a moment. Just bear with me. After a year we had achieved our 3-year target for Trackers.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

How many was that? Was it 120?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is not just a question in the number of students but I think it is important to note that the retainment rate for apprentices now in the first year was 100 per cent. Now that compares with something like a 40 per cent drop-out in the old apprenticeship scheme.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Is that the way it is run and the relationship you ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

The key to it is the mentors. That was probably one of the most important things we do. It is also the whole team of Trackers is very proactive, very keen, works extremely hard.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Can you briefly explain to us the mentors' role that they play now? Because it is an important role.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. We started with mentors in Advance to Work when it was under Education and Advance Plus and that proved the value of the mentors for getting people into work, I think. But we did not really need proving because I think there was evidence from all over the place that mentors are the way to go with apprenticeships. In the old days, and the old apprenticeship schemes going back into the 1960s and 1970s, you did not have mentors as such. You had people employed just to run apprenticeship schemes within large companies. That is all gone as we know. So governments are now operating apprenticeship schemes themselves rather than relying on the private sector to do it. Nevertheless an important part of an apprenticeship scheme is work experience and placements within companies but very few companies now - certainly in Jersey because of the overall nature of our companies not being that big - we do not have that many really large companies here that would run their own apprenticeship schemes. In fact, we do not have any, I do not think, with probably the exception of the States and one or 2 others maybe. So we are left with the situation where there are a lot of small and medium-size businesses that would like to run apprentices but cannot afford to have an apprenticeship department or cannot afford to have their apprentices properly organised and maintained because there is pressure on the

management structures in those small companies. They just simply do not have the time to organise apprenticeship schemes the way they should be done and as they were done in the old days. So what the mentors do is effectively replace that and work across several businesses with several different apprentices doing several different forms of apprenticeship or whatever the trade happens to be. So they act as the organiser of the training, they act as the counsellor for the student and ensure that the student is happy in getting the proper training that it should get and it is properly organised and is tracked.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Was that a problem before?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

This is where the name “Trackers” came from. The mentors track the apprentices ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

What is going on.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

... and track what is going on.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

But was that a problem in the previous scheme where maybe people were not getting the sort of training ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I do not really want to talk about the previous scheme. I only want to talk about Trackers.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

What, because it was that bad?

The Director for Education Sport and Culture:

We did not run the previous scheme.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I do not want to talk about the previous scheme. I think let us just be positive and talk about what we are now doing which is the current scheme which we think we have got set up in the right way. The mentors do the ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

But it accounts for less of the drop-out rate, put it that way.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think it probably does, yes. The mentors track the student, the young person, through his career progression and they also help the employer to track the employee properly through their training programmes and development and professional developments of all kinds and ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Do the mentors do it voluntarily or just ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

No, we have to employ mentors.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

How many have you got?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

They are highly-valued people. We have 5 at the moment and we need to double that as a minimum. In fact, where will this go in the end? I really do not know. I hope the apprenticeship scheme goes to the point where we have 15, 20 mentors in 3 to 5 to 6 years' time. I hope so.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

How many students have you got at the present time?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

About 128.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Okay. So it is getting to the point it is oversubscribed?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. We are developing now the width of the apprenticeship schemes that we are offering. There are the traditional trades, yes, but as the apprenticeship scheme becomes better recognised, better marketed, better accepted it becomes more aspirational for younger people because that is the key to it. It has to become aspirational and it has to become something that the young people want to be and compete to get into and smaller businesses want to become involved in in order to have the right kind of reputations.

[11:45]

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Have you got enough businesses that want to be involved with this to ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is growing. It is growing but we need more. We always need more. But it is growing and as the scheme gets accepted and the buzz grows around this as a concept, then I envisage that it will become more and more sought after and more and more ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Any idea where you are going to get further funding for this at all?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

We are currently looking at the next Medium-Term Financial Plan. There will be a significant growth bid put into the next Medium-Term Financial Plan. Obviously we have the Skills Board and the Skills Executive that are keen to develop it further, as are a lot of other members of the Council of Ministers. The Treasurer, for example, and the Chief Minister are very kind of keen, shall we say?

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Obviously you have got some money available with your under-spends this year so presumably that will help to some regard?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I am not sure that the under-spends are possible for Trackers.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

The underspends are not targeted at Trackers at the moment. The scheme that is running at the moment is fully funded. The question is whether or not we can secure further investment to expand it in the future. It is never wise to use under-spends that could be used for a one-off purpose to fund something that needs sustainable funding.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

True.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

It is fine to use it for, as I say, a one-off but if it needs sustainable funding you are better on a firm footing, particularly if you are going to employ people on contracts that will require that funding to be available.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So you have got funding through this M.T.F.P.?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Through this M.T.F.P.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Around about the level you have got at the current stage?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

For the level that we need. What Trackers have managed to do for people who are involved in leading it who have done an exceptional job is to achieve a level of apprenticeships that we thought would take us about 3 years, so they have been very quick in recruiting. Not just recruiting apprentices but recruiting sectors. I think we are across 12 sectors at the moment and they have got a target to expand across about 20 sectors. The most recent one is a partnership with Hospitality and Highlands College.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Can I just make one last point, though, on apprenticeship schemes which is that what we are doing here is something slightly different to (although very definitely connected to) the Back to Work initiatives being led by the Chief Minister and the Social Security Department. Obviously, naturally, their focus is on getting employment or getting people back to work that are currently actively seeking work. The apprenticeship scheme is a longer-term focus. What we are trying to do is get a whole process which stops younger people getting on to the Actively Seeking Work programme in the first place. But it will take time. It will take time to build but I am confident that it will be a very important and significant system of training young people between the ages of 16 to 21, whatever, into the future but that will naturally take more time.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

So are you saying this at the moment, we have not reached the stage where someone has finished an apprenticeship because it is still quite new?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well we have got a range of different apprenticeships.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Some of them are going to be shorter?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Some of them are relatively short-term apprenticeships. The healthcare one is a one-year programme, is it not, Mario, I think?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

I have not got that material but we can certainly provide you with the detail. The numbers here are completed automatically.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Some of them are longer term. Some of the I.T. (Information Technology) ones go through level 1, level 2 and level 3 so they take longer. Then you can go into foundation degrees after that which would have an element of ... you might find people studying higher education degrees at Highlands that will be tracked as apprentices because they will have done a lot of training and will go to a third or fourth year where they will still be apprentices. But they will go on to a full-time course at Highlands as the final year maybe of their Trackers' apprentice, for example.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

How would they be paid then?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

The funding for that usually would come from the employer. Those foundation degrees do not need to be full time.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Like day release?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

They can be part time, they can be weekend, they can be short term and they could be sandwich course day release for 2 or 3 weeks at a time, that kind of thing. It is all sorts of flexibilities.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

That is paid by the employer?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

One of the keys to Trackers is that it can be extremely flexible and it can work in different ways with different employers depending upon what is suitable for that particular employer.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

With the previous scheme, funding was provided to the employer and the employer then would pay for the training. With this scheme, the employer is not paid by the States. The training is provided so the employer does not pay for the training.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

So if they are a day away from their employment, the employer does not pay their wage?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

That would be very dependent on the employers.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

That would be between the employer and the student. Generally speaking, they do but ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Have we got a full range of sectors that employers ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

We have got about 12 sectors. I can provide you with details of the sectors. But we do have among the sectors pathways that are not the traditional pathways and we would want to expand that, particularly with I.T. given the investment that the Island is making in the programme.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

The employer would want to keep the student at the end, would he not? They do not want to lose him, having paid all the way through. So is that the intent: that you keep your member of staff?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think that is just only healthy, is it not? If you can offer full-on full employment to a fully-trained person that knows your company and everything then I think that has got to be the ultimate aim. Certainly it was in my day and I think it is no different now.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I just want to move on to one last subject before we finish and that is childcare regulation. Do you think there needs to be any change in regards to your policy relating to childcare registration?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I am quite happy with childcare registration per se and the development of it since it first came in with the law in 2002. We already have slightly tighter regulation in Jersey than within the U.K. However, I think that it is very important ... there is increasing focus on zero to 3 now. That is not specifically childcare registration, I have to say, there are overlaps. I think we are looking to try to improve that as part of our zero to 3 future strategies and the things that we are giving a lot of thought to at the moment.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Obviously the day care provision within schools is regulated and the checks and balances are done by Ofsted. In terms of the checks and balances and the regulator for private ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think that is slightly wrong, Constable.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Put me right.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

No, they are not done by Ofsted. Ofsted have no jurisdiction to operate within Jersey.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

So who regulates the ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Through the School Evaluation programme and sometimes we use Ofsted inspectors in our programme but it is not Ofsted. The only reason we would use them is because it gives us access to a pool of trained inspectors but it is not Ofsted.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

If you do not use Ofsted, who do you use?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Well we have our own team of professional partners at the department. A small team of 3 people who are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the performance of schools and when they would look at the performance of a primary school ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

When you say "schools", you ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

All schools.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

When you say "schools", though, do you mean just day care ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

No, no, the whole school. Then if a primary school has got a nursery then the nursery would be ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Will be part of that?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

... looked at in the context of the whole school. The Day Care Registration Law does not apply to schools, it applies to other providers of early years' education childcare for young children. In essence, the department's role and the Minister's role in registering those particular providers is one of ensuring that the facilities and the staffing are appropriate for the protection of children.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

If it is a privately-run day care centre, obviously there is a childcare registration team, a specific team that deal with that.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Which have got specific skills dealing with that.

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Do you think the people, those that are involved in the registration and the regulation of the school site, have the same specific skills to deal with making sure that the school day care centres are regulated in the same way?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. In fact, the criteria that would apply in a school setting is broader than the criteria that would apply in a nursery setting. So registration in a nursery setting is about making sure you have got the right staff ratios, you have got the right skills there and the premises are suitable for the purposes that you are intending. In the school setting, we would expect all those to be right because obviously most of the schools have got purpose-built nursery facilities. But then on top of that we are looking at the quality of teaching and learning, the quality support for young children and the progress that young children are making in that. So there is more of an educational emphasis on the quality of provision. This is something that we are advising because we used to have a head of Early Years Advisory Service that supported what was going on in schools and then the ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

You say “used to have”, why is it used to have?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Well we still have the post but alongside that we have the head of Day Care Registration and we are trying to bring those 2 teams together under one leadership because essentially they are both about the services for young children. So there will be a single head of Early Years. We have advertised that post recently, and the head of Early Years will oversee provision in both sectors.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Are there any issues or have there been any problems with the private sector in terms of childcare registration that you are aware of that concern you?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

We work very effectively with the private sector. There are occasionally issues where we would need to work very closely with a single provider. Those issues could be any number of things. It could be helping them to ensure that their premises are suitable for purpose, it could be supporting them with the development of their staff and it could be supporting them in terms of the Early Years’ curriculum. There are a broad range of issues but ...

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Do you support them in terms of staff training and things like that?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Their staff generally have access to our training which we think is a good thing and I think they appreciate that as well. There are occasionally issues that we would need to address with an individual or individual providers but you would expect that there are occasionally issues that we have to address when we are working with schools.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

You will always get a certain amount of attention where there is a commercial aspect and a regulator which is there to ensure standards. You will always get some attention with it sometime; that is inevitable.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

It is quite interesting, obviously for our Parish, because we will be getting a nursery school back and I would very much like to keep the nursery school as a private one. So we would have to be regulated in exactly the same buildings that are being used today for a nursery and then be regulated under this legislation and examined ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Not if the nursery is being provided by school staff who ...

The Connétable of St. Martin:

It would not be the school staff because you will have your own school staff in your own nursery where it had the old ...

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Any private nursery would have to be regulated under the Day Care Registration Law.

The Connétable of St. Martin:

Yes. I see there is a fee but I could not find it because I could not find regulations under the law that covered that fee. So I was not sure where I should have been looking for it. I am sorry. I spent the weekend but I could not find it.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Should we take this offline, Connétable, when we talk to you separately about St. Martin?

The Connétable of St. Martin:

No, it is interesting. Are there many premises registered under the Child Care ...?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, about half the children in the under-10 private arrangements.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

That includes before school and after school as well, does it not? It is not just always about during school?

Director, Education, Sport and Culture:

The private sector obviously provides a different ... some private providers offer 48 to 52 weeks a year; they offer a longer day. The Early Years' strategy that we brought in in 2006 was to enable parents to make the right choice that suited family needs and help the parents reconcile work and family life. So parents who simply want a nursery education for their children often look to the school nurseries. Parents who want all-day cover for more weeks a year will look to private providers. That is generally the sort of pathway.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Okay. One last subject just before we finish and I am not sure where we are going to go with this. Fort Regent and Education's role or what role you are playing within the steering group and ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well my 2 Assistant Ministers are on the steering group but it is led by Treasury.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Do you still see a long-term role for sport ... do you think it is viable to keep sport at Fort Regent? Is it something you want to see there?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well I think everybody does, really.

[12:00]

I think the working group itself is on record as saying that they want to see that.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Is that what you see it as: as a centre of sporting excellence or something?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think the working party has already made that statement, yes.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Would you like to see a pool back up there? I know we started earlier on talking about that.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

There are so many implications and side issues to that that I do not really personally have a view as the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture. Like lots of other local people I used to take my children up to Fort Regent swimming pool and it was the place to go for swimming in days gone by. But for whatever reason, past States Assemblies decided to close it down, or whatever they decided to do, they did, in the dim, distant past. The working party is now led by the Treasury because inevitably there will be funding issues around it. Anything could happen at Fort Regent so it has to come from the Treasury and be led by the Treasury. They are bending their mind to those kind of issues as we speak. So it will probably be wrong for me to make any kind of comment.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Okay, well we have had you for 2 hours which I very much appreciate. We have been through quite a few subjects again which I appreciate your candidness with. So can I thank you for attending today and wish you a nice rest of the day. Thank you.

[12:01]