



Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture

MONDAY, 20th JULY 2015

Panel:

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (Vice Chairman)

Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier

Witnesses:

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture

Director of Education, Sport and Culture

Ms. M. Bartram(?)

[10:03]

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour (Vice Chairman):

Now, are we ready? Yes, all right. Okay. Then, good morning, everyone, and welcome to this hearing of the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel. I am stepping in today, I am Vice Chairman, on behalf of the Chairman who unfortunately cannot be with us today due to illness. Just for the record I will ask everyone to introduce themselves. I will begin, Deputy Jeremy Maçon of St. Saviour.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier:

Deputy Sam Mézec of St. Helier No. 2.

Scrutiny Officer:

Mick Robbins, Scrutiny Officer.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Deputy Rod Bryans, the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Justin Donovan, Director of Education, Sport and Culture.

Ms. M. Bartram:

Melissa Bartram, I.o.D. (Institute of Directors) student.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Good morning, everyone.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Good morning.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you very much for joining us today. We would like to begin first of all by just referencing our report which the department has received and we are just acknowledging that the Minister has warmly welcomed it and we look forward to the response in due course. But we would like to begin with questioning on the M.T.F.P. (Medium Term Financial Plan) and Deputy Mézec will lead.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Sure. The M.T.F.P. provides investment in education as one of its priorities. Is the forecast investment sufficient to allow the Minister to follow his strategic aims?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Thank you. Yes, I think as you all know I stepped into this role expecting a full budget but we have had to do our bit in this structural deficit. So, we have got what we need at this moment in time to hit our aims but obviously our aspirations are somewhat curved at this moment in time. So some of what we hoped to achieve will be less and the effect of it will be less. As an example, pupil premium, which we hoped to roll out across all schools, will now be run as a pilot scheme which gives us a bit of time to examine the results and see where we are. We have managed to do what is expected of us. We think we can hit all of the targets that we set up; in fact, we are on track for doing that I think in the majority of cases. But I will ask the Director if he has got anything to fill in.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, just give some figures, if you like, in terms of hard cash. Yes, because you will be aware, you have tracked the M.T.F.P., it is going to evolve and there is a series of growth bid cuts and additional cuts. So I think what matters in the end is how much money we are going to spend at the end of all those negotiations. In 2016 we will be spending a little under £3 million more than we were this year, so there is overall growth in our budget which is good news. I think the point to make there though is most of that growth will cover demographic increases in pupils. So, as the Minister says, we can deliver our plan but it does mean, quite rightly, some tricky decisions and prioritising within our budget which, given the size of the deficit across the States of Jersey, is only to be expected. But we could just keep spending on Education.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Sure. How much flexibility do you have then if you get a few years into this and realise that perhaps the forecast was wrong and you are not able to deliver on something that you consider to be very important? What ability do you have to be able to ask for extra funding or rearrange what you are already trying to do to make things balance out easier?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Are you talking about the budget forecasting?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Okay. I think there is very little flexibility, to be fair. We have an extra £2.8 million moving ahead and that does not give us a lot of wriggle room, as it were. But I think in terms of where we are we have always cut our cloth according to our circumstance and we are fully aware that what has been done has been very necessary. The staffing cuts that we had to take on board were not expected and that was something new to us. To some extent we have some of the carry forwards removed as well so this has not left us with a lot of spare room to cope with the situation but I think we have been very brave. I think this Council of Ministers has been very brave in this M.T.F.P. I think the forecasting will be hit.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, so virtually all of our growth bids have been accepted and that is great news. Because they are all either to do with the rising pupil numbers or they are to do with raising standards and they are very specific: pupil premium, investing in the school improvement team. That is on the plus

side but on the minus side we have had to take a £1.2 million saving we were not expecting in 2016, as the Minister was saying, because of unmet staffing savings. That £1.2 million is important because raising standards is not just growth bids; there was some work in our existing budget. So, for example, to be specific, we need a new I.T. (Information Technology) system, I think there is a question on it later on, and that is going to cost us around about £500,000 but we haven't got the quotes in yet but that was in our base budget. But the £1.2 million means that this now not available and so in order to get that £500,000 we are going to have to reprioritise again internally. We can do it but I think we have hit rock bottom. Any more cuts in the budget we then would start to strain our ability to deliver the plan. At the moment we can deliver it in full.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

In which case then I suppose the question is, out of everything that is wanted to be achieved in the business plan, Minister, what are going to be your top 3 priorities?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well we have got our top 4 priorities but if I have to sort of prioritise 3 out of the 4, and again a question is coming up later, we worked on our curriculum which is the delivery of that and the rolling out of that over the next few years is a top priority for us. Raising standards is the core part of what we have been working on over this time and this is what this is all focused on to some extent. So working with the teachers and making sure that they have been addressed, their conditions, and everything that we have done from working with the unions is equally ... and they need some aspirational work done with them so we know we are on that sort of thing. I suppose the other 2 which is both autonomy and family; family we are already in the throes of working with. We have now got a situation where we have got the taskforce, the Early Years Taskforce, helping us with that. So the real key difference will be I think, going back to "what are your priorities?", would be autonomy and it is getting people to understand what that means.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. Anything else?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

No. Is it worth doing question 8 now because I think that possibly ties in with that?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, sure.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I want to ask, what is the Minister doing to improve recruitment and retention of teachers?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Okay. Well we have got a couple of issues, really. I think of all the questions that I was made aware of this is probably one of the ones that is most difficult to answer because it is the one we are working most closely with the unions on. That is the important start for us, is to understand their thoughts about this, so we created that partnership which you know we meet on a fairly regular basis. But the key part for us is looking at the talent link which we have to recruit through. It does not work, teachers are unhappy with it, and we understand it is a subject matter that we need to crack, as it were. Director, have you got any ...?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. Primary and secondary are different issues. The biggest issue in the primary sector there is not enough turnover and very little churn in the system. So I think last term, I would have to check, but it was something like 4 or 5 posts became available and so without the movement in the system it means we have teachers who are talented but locked in and careers, if you are not careful, get stifled. So that is an issue in primary and it is to do with our size, I think. Secondary, the issue of recruitment is making sure we have specialists in front of our kids, particularly in the core subjects. We have to have mathematicians teaching mathematics and scientists teaching science and because we are a small Island, sometimes struggle to recruit. That is not always the case, so the issues are different. The big constraint on us is the limit in terms of F.T.E. (Full-Time Equivalent) licences from the U.K. (United Kingdom). It is an understandable constraint. There has to be some kind of control over the population here in Jersey. If we were the local authority in the U.K. then if we did not have any good maths teachers in our county, we would simply employ. Around here we have to go through a system to demonstrate that we have not got anything on the Island first before we go to the U.K. So it is an area which we have not yet cracked, I am afraid. We know what the problems are but we have not really got there yet. We want to make sure we do put the best possible teachers in front of our kids. Recruitment and retention of the very best teachers is still an issue for us.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Given the deficit, how does the issue of pay fall into this and what is the position with the department with the States Employment Board in determining whether there needs to be any change in teachers' pay and terms of conditions?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Well teachers, inexperienced classroom teachers, in Jersey are very well paid. Significantly better paid than the U.K. and that was introduced some years ago when recruitment was a problem, so I do not foresee that as a major issue. As our teachers become more and more experienced, so

head teachers, for example, if you compare their pay to the U.K., they are not so well paid. They are not miles off the pace but they could expect to earn slightly more in the U.K. than here. But our classroom teachers are very well paid here in Jersey. That is not the big issue for us.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is probably also worth saying because you have got the word “retention” in there, I think the oversupply of nursery teachers is partly the success of the primary schools over here. We have got an absolutely thriving primary sector so retention is not that difficult, as the Director has already alluded to. People want to stay here because they are enjoying it so much.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, primary positions are kind of like gold dust, are they not? There are always ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

They are.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

They are.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well you have been around the schools yourselves, you will have seen the effect.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, graduate oversupplies. But then on the issue of secondary school retention of teachers, what have been highlighted as the barriers, the issues causing teachers to leave the profession?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

It is usually nothing really in our control. So you have teachers that come across and they miss their links with the U.K. and they kind of go. Some people come to Jersey and settle in well and just love the Island life and cannot imagine why they did not move here 20 years ago. Others come and miss the U.K. and those links, and so there is a bit of movement in the secondary sector in that way because virtually all of our primary teachers are Jersey-born and bred. Very, very few from the U.K., that is why it is very static, lack of movement, which on one hand is really positive.

[10:15]

We do not have vacancies to worry about so we do not have unqualified teachers in front of our primary school kids. We do not need to use supply teachers very much, so it is different in the 2

sectors. I am always surprised when people move to Jersey, they move again. It is a wonderful place, I do not intend to go.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, very strange, I admit. I would never want to leave here.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

I have been here a year and I have got no intention of going.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

So paperwork, filling in data, isn't highlighted as an issue as to why some teachers leave the profession?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

No. No worse here than the U.K. We are looking at paperwork and bureaucracy. It is interesting when you talk to teachers. I wince a little bit when teachers talk about planning and assessment as being bureaucratic processes; they are not. That is called teaching. In order to teach a lesson you have got to plan it and in order to plan it you have to know what the children need to learn and therefore you have to assess the children's progress. So I do not have a lot of sympathy when teachers complain about the time they spend on planning and assessing. They should, that is what they are paid to do. But in addition to that we can, if we are not careful, get them to fill in all sorts of questionnaires and paperwork and health and safety risk assessments, a lot of bureaucracy we can and are reducing. We have a group that is doing that bit by bit. I do not believe the teachers in Jersey have more workload in terms of bureaucracy than the U.K.; less so. But we are working to keep that down to an absolute minimum. What we do need to do is make sure assessment and planning is as streamlined as possible but it will always be necessary to do that.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What have been the biggest sticking points then when you have been speaking to teachers' unions?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

I have a slightly different view of teachers' unions. My starting point is, and I say this to unions and it winds them up every time I say it, but I will say it anyway, my view is if you teach in Jersey, you are lucky. You have got lovely kids, some of the best classrooms, best buildings I have been in. There is no Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) breathing down your neck. We teach slightly fewer days, shorter days than the U.K. The list goes on; you

are better paid. So if you are a teacher in Jersey my view is you start from a very positive position and you are lucky to be here. Having said that, teaching is difficult, it is tiring, it is emotionally draining. So it is a difficult job but it is a rewarding one. I think teachers are lucky to be teaching in Jersey, I really do, and I remind the unions of that every opportunity I can.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think the other thing that happened when we created the partnership with the previous administration, the previous Director, it has grown into a much more open and transparent relationship so they understand fully where we are attempting to go. They have been up to speed on all the curriculum changes that we have done, they have been up to speed on the business plan; in fact, they have had some part in building that. So the discussions we have are not as difficult, I would have expected, as we would have had previous years.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Very nice answers; I am not sure the question was answered though which is what are the sticking points? Is there anything that is being proposed that they are not happy about at all?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Such as?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Basically I think we should be teaching more days than we currently are. We are teaching 2 days less than the U.K. and I think over 11 years that builds up for our very young people, so I would like us to be teaching the same number of days as the U.K. Our school day is, on average, slightly shorter so on the whole, particularly our secondary schools, are finishing about half an hour earlier than I would like them to. Of course the teachers' unions understandably disagree with me and that is something we will have to discuss and debate. To be fair to the teachers' unions is that what I find here in Jersey is their starting point is the students. I have not yet had a conversation with the unions that they have not come back to wanting to do best by the kids which is a very positive position to be in. But, and you were alluding earlier, at a time when we are going to be restraining pay rises to a minimum, it is a difficult time to ask people to do more work when we are not raising salaries significantly. So that is a sticking point and we will keep discussing it but I suspect we will be discussing it for some time.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Thank you. Any others?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

No. There will always be a difference in perception of a workload and I think that is something we have always got to look at. I think I said you to before, the thing with teachers as a profession, if you reduce the amount of bureaucracy they have to complete they do not go home any earlier. They will still work late and it just means they will spend their time working on preparing lessons rather than filling forms in. So I am very comfortable about getting bureaucracy down to an absolute minimum and we will continue to do that. The main sticking points I think are to do with the number of days we teach. We do agree that also we would like to introduce more training days. So in the U.K. teachers have 5 days a year for professional training. I do not think we need 5. My experience in the U.K. is those 5 days are not used well but I would certainly want 3 or 4. At the moment we have 2 and an air show and the air show is a bit of distraction; a Lancaster Bomber flying around and you are trying to focus on assessment framework. But we agree on that. What we have not agreed on is how we get that extra training in.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I think we have got a question on that coming up so we will go into more detail then.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Okay.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Nothing to add on that section?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Back to question 2.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Okay, question 2 then. The business plan talks about reshaping the curriculum and the panel were told a little bit about this at a briefing recently. Could the Minister tell the panel what changes can be expected?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. I think you have both read the business plan, and you have got a copy there in front of you. The real key to us was Jersey filing it, for want of a better word, and it has been a top priority. So the 2 areas that most consistently have been changed to reflect education in Jersey would be history and geography. These have all been ratified, in fact, it was ratified I think just last week, with the Curriculum Council so we work quite closely with them. But there has to be obviously a continuum which means that pupils will have to understand that we have still got to work with the U.K. curriculum because that is where their education is based. It is where the examinations are based so we have to make sure there is a straight line through to that. But we have worked quite closely on changing the curriculum at Highlands College and you could probably add a bit to that.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. As you know in the plan there are 2 things we want to do. We want to make the curriculum much more relevant to Jersey's history, its culture, and that is why the Minister says we have rewritten the history and geography curriculum to enhance ...

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

From whose perspective?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

From ...?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

The history from whose perspective?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

How do you mean?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Well, as you know, history can be portrayed in many different ways.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

When the curriculum is formed, on whose perspective is it being formed?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

On the historical effects. We are trying not to put a bias in any shape or form. What we tend to do with ...

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Which is incredibly difficult in history.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

It is very difficult and in fact we ask children to form a view. So what we will do is provide them with the facts, the dates, the record, if you like. Then in history, what the children will do is debate around that, some of the morals, the moral structures within all that, but we have tried being as non-biased as we possibly can.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Excellent. Sorry, I interrupted, please continue.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. So the history and geography has been rewritten, that was our starting point, and then we will work through. So currently we are working on drama, careers and P.H.S.E. (Personal Health Social and Economic). Those are the 3 that we are working on, ready for next year. P.H.S.E. in particular will be strengthened around the political processes here in Jersey. The other side of the curriculum, as you know, we wanted to align our curriculum with the Island's economy and we have been doing a lot of work on that. So from this September Highlands College curriculum has been redeveloped. So now young people who go to Highlands, even if they are at level 1, will be following a general education as well as their technical and vocational education. So if they get to the end of level 1 they can now progress because they will continue with their English and mathematics. In the past that was not the case. If they get to the end of level 1 they are then stuck because they have not had their English and maths and they cannot move forward. The other difference with the qualifications at Highlands College, they all now lead to U.K. nationally-recognised qualifications but which are relevant to industry here in Jersey. So our construction, our hospitality, our electrical engineering, all of those courses, what is taught to students relates to what goes on here in Jersey rather than the U.K. I think the example that we have used a lot, which I think is a good one is, for example, at the moment, kids who are doing construction at Highlands do a lot of bricklaying. When you go into the construction world in Jersey very few bricks are laid, it is all block work and steel work, and so the curriculum has been changed. So it is a long journey, it will take us 3 years to get there, but we have started to rewrite, if you like, the softer side of the curriculum to reflect Jersey and we have also started to redevelop the technical

and vocational side of the curriculum, starting at Highlands College. Frankly, it was the easiest place to start because it is nice and contained and we have got complete control over it.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Your question raises a really good point and it is worth taking a step back to say how we got here. Which is that we had this working party, not just to do with teachers and heads and the various people in the department, but we went out to the I.o.D. and we went out to chamber and we went out to construction companies. So in relation to where we have got to in producing the curriculum that you see now in relation to what the Director has just said with Highlands College that was the route they particularly wanted to take. There was more alignment to do with the economy of the Island. But to answer your question with a very specific illustration, I was at a primary school, St. John's Primary School, and they had gone and taken the children as a re-enactment of the Battle of Jersey. So you had both sides of the altercation, with the French and the English, and they re-enacted it but it is a cross-curriculum thing. So not only did the children inhabit the notion of what happens in that historical thing, going back to the Director's point about facts, but they then feel the experience and they start to write essays about it and they draw pictures of it, and so it goes. So that is how we bring the whole thing to life.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you. One question which I have got from that is talking from Highlands and when children get there they want to follow a vocational route. Now with the introduction of this compulsory general education standards, or to be, what happens if a student does not engage, fails perhaps their English studies, does that prevent them from progression on to the other routes they are following?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, it does anyway at the moment. So if you have got a young person who gets to Highlands College and has not done well so far, completes their level 1 study, say, in childcare or in construction, if they have not currently also been picking up with their English and maths, they are then stuck. So what we are saying to young people is from now on we will be delivering a general education alongside your vocational education so that those opportunities ... and that still is an issue where young people may not want to engage but at least they have the same opportunity. If they do not engage then we will work harder or change the way we teach or change the way we present it. We will make it more relevant. What we are finding is, if you tie mathematics into say motor vehicle studies and make it more relevant, so in fact when young people of the age of 16 or 17 are stripping down a gearbox, they are studying ratios and it is just pure mathematics. A gearbox is a mathematical piece of kit, and so the idea is to tie as much of the English and mathematics into the courses to make it relevant, and then you have got a chance of saying: "Well in addition to that, algebra is also important." So, it is a step forward but, in the end, if young

people refuse to engage then we are still going to have that problem, which I think is a step in the right direction.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Is there any document that is available, either publicly or at least for the panel to see, that outlines what changes in the curriculums, particularly for history and geography, there have been?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Sure. Yes, we have rewritten ... sorry, Minister.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well I was going to say the curriculum document is a quite heavy document.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, 160 pages for English, I think.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, it is. The one thing we do want to do, because I think this is going on to the website and the like, is make sure the public get the opportunity to do that. If you want a truncated summary you will find it in the business plan, so there is an illustration there. We wanted to start to knit all of these things in together. Do you want to ...?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, the history and geography element of the curriculum though are quite short, 4 or 5 pages, they are really quite light, so we could give those sections to you separately; they are all on the website. Because, as the Minister said, when the Curriculum Council confirmed the curriculum, we put them all up on the website, we sent links out to all the schools. Quite rightly, English and maths and science, but particularly the English, is very long indeed. Having looked at it, and somebody who has read it 3 or 4 times, I can agree with you. But the history and geography, the other subjects, are relatively light in terms of depth because they are the U.K. curriculum. So we can ping those sections to you if you want to look at them separately.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

If you would like to have a look at where we are in terms of drafting the careers and drama and P.H.S.E. we can also provide ... that is work in progress. As I say, that is for next September but we can easily give you that.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Another work in progress is we decided, I think it was the Director's idea, to come up with a Jersey passport for heritage so the children get a clean reflection of what is happening across the Island and so they get access to most of the material they would not have previously got.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

You mentioned in the context of Highlands that you had been working with I.o.D. and Chamber of Commerce in terms of looking at what changes you want to make.

[10:30]

When looking at the history curriculum, who did you speak to then about trying to Jersey-fy? What local groups were involved in that?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Sure. Well first of all what we have done is empower history teachers to do that piece of work. In the past what we have done is officers have led on it but what we try now to do is to get the teachers to lead on that piece of work and have those working groups chaired by deputy head teachers rather than officers. But in terms of outside agencies, we have been talking to Jersey Heritage, the Société and various interested groups. In fact, the Minister and I have a meeting in a German bunker I think coming up. Because what we are looking to do, if we are writing this stuff into the curriculum, we want these historical places available during the timetable. So if we are saying that all young people of a certain age need to visit a German bunker and understand what they look and feel like, if we are going to write that into the curriculum, we have to have access to them during the school day, so we are negotiating with these groups. We have been over to Hougue Bie, we have been to the museum and what we are finding is a real appetite for people who are the guardians of Jersey's heritage to make it available for the children in effect. There is no problem with enthusiasm. Managing it is the problem. So the key link here will be Rod McLoughlin and Jon Carter. Those are the 2 key point positions. The work on the passport, the heritage passport, starts in October and that will be introduced for young people in next September. So the idea is they will have an entitlement at certain ages to have certain experiences in Jersey and it is quite exciting really, I think.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is. It has got to be true to say that we have always taught history very well over here but I think it was amplified for me, and the same consideration of the Director came in, I had taken some Adversac(?) Partnership survivors to a history teachers' meeting and I think they were quite astonished at the level of information that was being passed back and forth. They had not really realised it themselves and I think that sparked as much interest as anything else. When you get the, the usual word, practitioners, but people who are involved in these things in front of people, it becomes much more important.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

A couple of years ago the States Assembly voted to recognise 28th September as Jersey Reform Day in a commemoration of the revolution Jersey had in 1769, I think it was, which was a fundamental moment in Jersey's transition to becoming a parliamentary democracy.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I cannot remember what the then Minister for Education, Sport and Culture said, and the first thing I am going to do is go to Hansard after this hearing has finished. Has that been something that has been looked at to insert into the history curriculum?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

It has. To be fair to the previous Minister, there is a Jersey studies component. So in our primary schools there is a short block of time where children do study the history of the Island and that particular date is part of that piece of work. It is a little ad hoc as to whether all children have exactly the same amount of time on that, so it varies from school to school. By putting into the curriculum and making it an entitlement what we are looking to do is to have a much more consistent approach so that all children have access to some key experiences and data. But that particular date is in the Jersey studies module. What I cannot do is guarantee that every school is delivering that module in the same way with the same importance and the same weight. It depends a little on the teachers' own experiences. That is true of the cultural experiences the children have. If you are a school over in the east of the Island and you have an enthusiastic teacher, the chances are you have gone to the castle or you have gone to Mont Orgueil and you have had a day there. But not every young person regardless has been there other than perhaps on a Saturday morning with Mum and Dad. I keep meeting young people who have not been to Elizabeth Castle, who have not been to Mont Orgueil, and these are crucial to Jersey history. You can stand and look down over Elizabeth Castle and you can track the modern history of Jersey by

its buildings. But you need to have somebody that understands the layout of the buildings and can explain. It is fascinating when Jon Carter takes you through it. But most of our young people have not had that experience so the idea is to have some consistency and coherence across that experience.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think, just to follow on, I cannot remember myself what the previous Minister said in relation to this but I remember the theme being expanded because we had big discussions with Rod McLoughlin at the time to take the notion of reformation and liberty and freedom and all that and that was fed through the schools, so it acted as a catalyst for the greater expansion of those ideas and things.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you. We have got one sub-question here which we would like to ask about which is, what, if any, are the planned changes in relation to French teaching assistants in primary schools from September?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, basically in the current M.T.F.P. there was £25,000 to pay for primary assistants. That money runs out at the end of this session. That was paying for ... each primary school had about 2 hours of time to do that. Although it is £25,000 in the M.T.F.P. we were spending about £40,000 on that provision. That money no longer exists so that will stop, has stopped, from the end of this current academic year. The money that we spend on secondary support continues, that is about £160,000, and that support is based in mainly French but also Italian and Spanish and a lot of that support goes into preparing young people for their oral exams. In terms of primary, those schools that want to continue to buy that support in, and some do, then they are funding it themselves from their own budgets. So that support will continue but it will be funded by schools from their budgets rather than from the department.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is a really good illustration of the autonomy situation. So as an example the head of Les Landes was in that situation where she was losing, due to the M.T.F.P., the funding for that. So she was losing that but she has taken that responsibility on herself and she has welcomed that because it is more in-house now with the people that they have got. So they had the ability to look at their own funding and use it themselves.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

How does that fit in with kind of the thrust in the business plan which is to try and teach languages at a much earlier age because they are picked up much earlier, whereas it seems that the priority has shifted to the secondary school where it might be more effective in the primary school?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is a good point. I think it goes back to that old quote, I think it was Eisenhower who said: "Planning is everything, plans are useless." So I think what we did was we planned for that circumstance without realising we were going to have to address it as a budget cut in the M.T.F.P. So it is still a priority with this and it is still something we are aware of and we have got those conversations with the heads of schools. They have still got the budgets to play with. They have that autonomy to choose where they place those budgets. It is still a priority and I think there is a consideration that we have got a working party looking at the bilingual skills so we will still be working on those areas.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

When is the bilingual group due to report to the Minister?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Due to report at Easter. That will first come to the ministerial team. Just to go back to ... there is no evidence to suggest that 2 hours a week in a primary school with an assistant is having a huge impact on standards of languages in our primary schools; there is not evidence to suggest that. What we need in our primary schools are French-speaking teachers to teach French well and properly. So the group that is beginning to look at the teaching of French in our schools begins its work, again, in October so you will see from the business plan it is trying to work its way in. When we talk to our schools and say: "What evidence have you got to say that those 2 hours are making an impact on the quality of languages in your school?" there is very little defined evidence it is having a huge impact. So when we talk to our schools what they have said, they would rather have the freedom to buy that support in. So Trinity, for example, are very interested in Italian so if you go to Trinity School you will see there are Italian lessons going on and they are buying in support to support them in that language. It does not always have to be French. So, I do not think that a reduction in central support for a standard 2 hours at every school across the Island, I do not think that is contrary to focusing on raising of standards generally on the Island. Yes, and we could have a long conversation about this but one does not equal the others.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Shall we move on?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Sure.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, if we talk about our professional partners now. The business plan talks about the ambitious talent of professional partners, so what is missing at the moment?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

One professional partner is what is missing. We have got 2 new ones who have come on, so I think we will have something like 4 or 5, including the Director, and I mention that because at least 3 of these new professional partners will have Ofsted experience and Ofsted background which is important for us. I think the other thing that has happened is over the length of time we have had professional partners in the school, which is about 4 or 5 years now, is the buy-in, the accessibility to the partners. What they have seen over this duration of time is once you get something like this it has to gain ground and it has done. I think the primary schools picked it up first and they have generated some excitement about professional partners. They feel they are given a boost in the right direction and that has been picked up by the secondary schools now. So that is the bit; that was the missing key. Is there anything else you want to add?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

No, what we need in Jersey is Jersey-based capacity and resource of people who have got proven experience in raising standards across groups of schools, not just one school and, as the Minister said, we will have 4 people. I think we have got 3 now that can do that; 2 are quite new to the Island. One has been here a few months only. We are out to advert at the moment for our next one and that will be a very important capacity. Sitting alongside that we have a small resource, but nevertheless a significant resource, to buy in to the team, the practising Jersey head teachers. So we have got some of the best head teachers I have ever worked with. The idea is we want to blur the edges between head teachers and officers so that they would work with us a day, or a day and a half a week, inside the team to help develop policy and pursue ideas so, for example, a development of bilingual provision on the Island. I am very keen indeed. We have a Jersey head teacher working with us on that to make sure that what we do is going to support schools, not be problematic. So that's the second bit. The third bit we would have a very small resource, very small indeed, to buy in very specific expertise every now and again if we need it. But we want to reduce our reliance on external consultants and have Jersey people moving us forward. So by Christmas we should have a school improvement team which is complete which will help deliver on the business plan.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

The other side is they will all be living in Jersey because before there was some commute. It makes a difference.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

So our schools should be able to pick up the phone and within an hour somebody should be able to get to their school without having to fly in the next day.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

With that, how will you prevent perhaps an over-cosy relationship developing between the schools and the professional partners?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. Well firstly being very careful who we bring along. If you met our professional partners, you would realise it is not ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

The word "cosy" does not apply.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, they are not cosy in that sense. These are focused, determined people. Second is our data systems. Once we have a data system up and running we will know warts and all how our children are progressing or not. At the moment, because we do not have that data, it is quite easy to find excuses. Once we have a data system we will be able to ... that is another year away yet; we will come on to that if you like. There is no hiding because we will be able to see the progress all children are making. The third is we are maintaining links with the U.K. So you are probably aware we have just seconded a head teacher to a secondary academy in Sunderland. The idea is our head teachers will be going across to that school on a regular basis. We will have expertise from that chain working with us. So those are the 3 things: careful who we appoint, really keep an eye on the data and then maintain links with the U.K. so we do not lose track of what is going on around us. I think your point about cosy is probably why standards in Jersey have plateaued for the last decade. As you know, Jersey standards used to be above the U.K. They have plateaued; the U.K. caught up with Jersey 5 years ago and are now ahead of Jersey. I think that is because we have not really focused in the way we should have done, so we are going to protect against that moving forward.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. We will move to our next question, question 4. The Minister has mentioned previously that he intends to focus resources on supporting families. In order to achieve this does he intend to use new resources?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, there are 2 aspects I think which are worth amplifying. First is pupil premium which we have spoken a lot about. I think I mentioned it earlier, because of the cuts that we have taken we have had to readdress that. It is still being welcomed by everybody. I think there has been a lot of press speculation about pupil premium so we focused our attention on a pilot scheme that will be resourced by identifying those children that need it most at that particular point in time. The other thing in relation to supporting families, you will understand we have already got our Pathways at Samarès and we have already got plenty of the schools who are beginning to work very closely with families. Plat Douet is a really good example where they bring families in to witness teaching, apart from anything else, so there are about 15 parents are brought in every week to sit and watch what happens within a school. Then equally the head there has invited a small coterie of parents to come in and just be around at the breakfast time when the children are entering the school.

[10:45]

So there are a lot of connections being made with parents. But we have also got the taskforce, the Early Years Taskforce, which has now, I think, been in since about 5th May. Dr. Helen Miles is heading up that so there is another consideration that we will be working very closely with, on a tripartite, the Home Office and with Health to help with families.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay. Just on some of the detail of the pupil premium, just so I am clear, is it then a pilot scheme based around students within a school or did you mean by individuals across the whole system when it is divided on need?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Do you want to take this?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

We have not decided yet.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, basically the pilot will run from 1st January through to summer and then we go Island-wide September 2016. The group that is working on this met for the very first time last week and, I was saying earlier to the Minister, I could not resist to just go and sit in there for an hour or so to listen; it was really a very interesting meeting. So there are various ways of looking at it. The easiest way would be to say we will take 4 or 5 primary schools, presumably town-based primary schools, a secondary school, and run the scheme through so we have got all the age ranges and that will be quite an interesting pilot. Another way to do it is say we are just going to take one year group across the Island and then build up from there. Or a mixture of the 2. So we have not decided yet and we will come forward with proposals. Before we finalise the pilot we would like to take it to our head teachers. Our heads have worked very hard with us on developing the plan so when we get to key decisions we want to make sure heads are involved. I suspect what we will do is look for a group of schools to begin the work because then we can test the systems, the eligibility criteria, and the money builds up. So by growing the number of children involved, what we are not doing is watering down the amount of money we are spending per pupil. So if we try to even it out we would only be spending say £300 per head in the first year; that is not going to make an impact. We need to spend more like £800 to £1,000 per pupil to make an impact. So what we are likely to do is start with a relatively small number of young people and then build up between now and 2019 so that they will be working with between 10 and 15 per cent of the Island's population I think we will need to get to in the end.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

The budget for that, is that just from retaining within the department or has that been new growth funding?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

It is all growth funding. It is all growth, yes. It grows each year between now and 2019.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you for that slight diversion. But going back to the matter on supporting families, what is the priority for the Minister in this particular area?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well the priority will be when Helen Miles comes back, for me, in particular, is seeing where the inclusion of what we have to do in early years will happen and how that knits in with all the other facilities, the other departments. Until I get that report, until I understand what resources she

wants to have and what resources we have in place, I will not know what direction we will be taking.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Just for the record, when is that report due?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I do not know, to be fair. Helen Miles?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

I think it is October.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

But I would have to check on that.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay. We will move on to the next question. What is the progress on the updating of data management systems within the schools?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think it is a bit technical, you can ...

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, basically we have just gone out to P.P.Q. (Pre-Purchase Questionnaire) so P.P.Q. was signed off a few weeks ago so we are out to the market. We are inviting expressions of interest in developing the system and we are on schedule, it is tight, but we are on schedule to procure a new system, install a system and have it up and running for September 2016. My own view is it will take us the whole of that first academic year to get the system absolutely running because we have got to train the staff. The idea is if you are a teacher in Jersey and you are assessing a child during the lesson, assess them online, and as soon as you touch the button, it updates your class system, updates the school system and updates the Island-wide system. At the moment, as Melissa here, she will be the first to say, teachers are having to double or triple handle information and complete. So, yes, going back to your original point about workload, they are having to do a lot of work in terms of uploading assessment. This new system means it is just instant and it means, as Director and Minister, we will be able to sit down and look at children's progress which

is live data. We are a long way away from it and we have got a lot of catching up. These systems have been up and running in the U.K. for 3, 4, 5 years and have had a huge impact. One of the reasons the U.K. have caught us up and overtaken us is because of using data on children's progress to change what they teach, how they teach, when they teach it, to who they teach it. It is a very flexible set of arrangements. So, a year till we have the system technically in place, I think 2 years before it is up and running and being used to raise standards.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

So the system that we have in place that you may have heard of, the C.M.I.S. (Computer Management Information System) that we all know something about is for us redundant and, as the Director says, really gives us the historical, it tells us what happened as opposed to the situation that we want to consider, which is live information. It should cut down, as he says, going back to your earlier question, the bureaucracy the teachers have to deal with.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

What work is being done with other States department officers who have procured other data systems in order that lessons are learnt when new I.T. systems are purchased?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

A lot. We are working with them. We are quite lucky. I would like to say this was planned but it is fortunate. Health and Social Services are also at the moment trying to procure a new data system so we are looking to procure a single system so that particularly our vulnerable children will be on one system and not a number. That slowed us up a little bit because it makes it a bit more complicated but in the long run I think it will be cheaper because of economies of scale but also that social workers, special education needs co-ordinators, head teachers and myself will all be on a single system and that will be a first. U.K. has not pulled that off yet so it would be nice to get ahead of the game.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Within that, is there looking to be compatibility within other systems?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. So it will basically run on the J numbers so there will be a single identifier for children throughout the system. At the moment every system seems to use different identifiers, including ours, so we are moving to a single identifier so that the systems can talk to each other. The beauty of the system we are looking to procure is that it will read other systems and bring data together into a single entity. It makes it slightly more expensive than the standalone systems but

the idea is to have a single system where parents only have to tell us their story once and it is all on.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

It is a huge piece of work and I think the sticking point that we have come across is data protection really. That is important to us because schools are particularly vulnerable in this area so we need to make sure that we have got that sorted before we advance too quickly.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

What we have done is we have brought head teachers in, S.E.N.C.O.s (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) in, class teachers in to have a look at systems and test them to make sure they work on a practical day-to-day basis. The whole of the procurement system, we will have practitioners in the room making judgments. In fact, they will have the final say. If teachers say: "This is not going to work" then there is no point us procuring it, so we will have practitioners involved all the way through.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, just whenever there is a statement about a new I.T. system I just get visions of the old H.R. (Human Resources) one which they bought, was supposed to have all the bells and whistles on, but does not quite work, it is not compatible with the old system, so the people in H.R. are having to use both systems all the same. I am glad to hear that that should not be happening in the future.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I wonder, though, if you could tell me, and we are going to monitor children's progress very carefully, and going to challenge schools, how exactly will the progress of an individual student be monitored?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Okay, so there will be a point in time where we will benchmark the data. So when the children get to 7 we will have logged their reading ability and numerical ability, their ability to the social skills, communication skills and they will be logged against some standard assessments that all schools will use. From that data we should learn all sorts of things and we should certainly learn by the time they get from 7 to 11 the progress they should have made, and we have all that information available. Now at the moment what happens is, we test the children and therefore we predict

where they are going to be in 5 years' time and that is what we test. What this system says is, in 5 years' time if you do nothing other than just teach them the way you are, that is the progress they are going to make. What it will do then is drill down into their ability to spell and do they read for fun? How often they read. It will record a lot of information and that allows us to change what we do in that 5-year period. The idea is to have a target which is significantly higher than the prediction. So if I was a child of the age of 7, I would have a predictive result at the age of 11 and what we will do is spend the next 4 or 5 years trying to get children ahead of that game. That is the first thing. Secondly, it will mean, we have only got about 1,000 kids in each year group, so I should be able to sit with all of the primary head teachers in one room and say: "Our data is showing us at the moment on the whole our 9 year-olds are good at these things but they are not good at this. Look at the data on understanding area, they really do not have it. Two-thirds of Jersey's 8, 9 year-olds do not understand area; that is what the data is telling us. You guys need to go back and re-teach it, look at how you are teaching it, change how you are teaching it and we can retest it and work our way through." So what we can have is an ongoing dialogue of what children understand and can do. That means by the time the children have got to the next staging point they should be overreaching those predicted points. Basically in the U.K. the system that does that is called RAISEonline. It has been available for the last 5 or 6 years. It has had an enormous impact on raising standards, particularly in reading, writing and numeracy, and that is what we are looking at bringing to Jersey and we will do it that way. So, basically it gives us intelligence on what children can and cannot do and allows us to change what we teach and how we teach it but it will take time for that to be seen right the way through. In the U.K. it took 7 to 8 years for that to hit the G.C.S.E. (General Certificate of Secondary Education) results. Jersey, because we are smaller, we only have 1,000 kids, we think we can make the impact in 3 to 5 years, so that is how it will work.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

In order to populate this data, how is it produced? You said teachers in classrooms but will it also be done through examination results, written results and oral results? How will it be done?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, it is a single record. So if you have got a child in the school, when they are admitted they are set up on a database: date of birth, basic information. Then as they move through their educational career all this stuff is added to it as it goes along. So it is a single record which is updated continuously. That single record is available to the teacher, to the head teacher, to the department, Social Services, everybody has got that same record. So the older the children become the more detail we have on their progress.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

So let me clarify the question, I probably did not make it very clear, which is when you are trying to assess, say trigonometry, has it been picked up, has it not been picked up?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

What I am trying to process, how is that assessed? Because depending on how it was assessed, through an examination, through an oral, it could demonstrate differently how a child understands a subject.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Okay. Well here in Jersey what we have done is develop an assessment framework and that was finally agreed 2 weeks ago, so all of our primary sector, starting with key stages 1 and 2. So for all of our primary schools from this September we have an agreed assessment framework, so for each year we split into steps and phases. So we have all agreed that at certain dates and at certain times children ought to be able to do certain things and that has been agreed across the Island as a whole. Therefore, we will be able to track individual children against our framework so that all teachers will be using the same teaching objectives and assessment arrangements so that we will be able to compare notes from school to school. The second point to make is then we have put in place moderation processes, a check of that accuracy. So what we do is have teachers looking at each other's work, comparing them to the original teaching objectives and say: "Well I have graded that at that level, you have graded it at that level, what is the difference between the 2?" and you have a professional dialogue. We have got a training programme so our teachers are being trained to do that. At the moment I think we have got about 30 teachers who have been trained up to moderate and we are going to work that up to about 100. So an overall framework and then a moderation process to make sure we are all using it in the same way and that way we have got some reliable data.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. Then how will the teachers' workload be monitored?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Well that in a sense is for head teachers to do that. We will not be able to do that at the centre. What we will be able to do is pick up all their assessment arrangements. What we can say to teachers when the system is in place, they will not have to move any marks around. They will not have to sit in the evening and start transferring assessment data into sheets and then from those

sheets into C.M.I.S. As they click on their iPad or their laptop or on the whiteboard, whichever system they are using, it will automatically update the system. For people like me who will be “read only” I will not be able to change any of the data but they will, so at any point they can go back and alter it, so we will always have live data. They will also have access to all the other schools. So if you are a year 6 teacher, you will be able to look at the data of all the year 6 children across the Island.

[11:00]

You will not see their names, you will just see their J numbers, but you will be able to say: “Well, it might moderate the results for the teaching or the tutors or whatever it is, compared to the Island as a whole, we are doing quite well.” Or: “We are not doing well enough, I need to go back on my teaching.” So the idea is we are open and transparent; we can all see each other’s work and progress.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

What rights will a student have to see their own data?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Absolutely, they can see it any time they like. So if you go into our primary schools, all but 4 of our primary schools have already introduced a data system and the other 4 are on the way, and both children and parents can sit and have a look at their own file at any time they want to and they do. They are very curious, children; they love looking at their data.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Sure. Within that, is there a system of appeal or challenge when perhaps something is written down which perhaps they do not agree with?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

No. The teacher’s judgment is final, I am afraid. Yes, we cannot have kids quibbling ... sometimes they have to do what the teacher tells. It is not a democracy though in schools. I know it is in Scrutiny committee but ...

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay. Anything else on that?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Just to ask, when we spoke about this at the last hearing you mentioned the inevitability that when you introduce a new system some people will love it, some people will rue the day that it was introduced because they preferred the old one.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

What is being done to keep teachers on board and make sure that all of their concerns with any new system are taken on board and when they are uncomfortable with aspects of that new system that they are reassured for that and trained just to make sure they can use it properly?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

They have got 2 routes really: one is to directly discuss matters with the heads which, again, goes back to this whole notion of autonomy, but the other is the relationship we have with the unions. They understand totally what it is that the teachers are expected to do and equally what they want to do, and so all of that feedback with the working party is always sitting behind that, as the Director has already implied. There was a meeting only last week. They play such a big role in what we are doing. They are aware of what is expected of them so there is not that much dislocation between what they are going to do and what they are doing. So I think there is an opportunity for them to ... we are always looking at the training of the teachers in particular, so that is an aspect that has already been picked up.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. What we find, to be honest, with the classroom impact, you would be hard-pushed to find a teacher that does not fit this category. If you demonstrate to them this has an impact on the kids, they will take to it. If you can demonstrate that this is going to be helpful to understand children's learning, it will change the outcomes, once you have persuaded them of that key principle, and it is very easily done, the evidence is just overwhelming. You will then find even the most reluctant teachers will give it a good go. The other thing is we are finding the systems are dead simple. They are designed; they are intuitive. I am not technically gifted and I use systems but they are ever so easy to use. They just guide you through the system. So I think if you firstly convince teachers this will have an impact on the kids and then make it simple and reliable so it always works, then I think we are down to a very small number. What you find then is if you have got a very small number who are a bit reluctant, they kind of get taken along with enthusiasm and the rest. So far the schools that have introduced these systems and are using them, staff have taken

to it really very well. So if you go to say D'Auvergne where this is really well developed, teachers there would not go back to the old system.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay. Just one final question because you said that once data is entered it then populates many other spreadsheets and databases, how easy will it be for a teacher to edit something? Say they made a mistake, put information in the wrong field and that type of thing?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

It is easy. First of all, it is difficult to put it in the wrong field, because the computer understands: whoops that is not right. Teachers change their assessments all the time; it has to be flexible. If you look at the old marked books, they are all scribbles and worked out. It can be done any time, very simply. I would have to check on this, I think it is the teachers and the T.A.s (Teaching Assistants) are the only people that can make the changes. I do not even think head teachers can do it. But it is instant. Yes, it is not a problem.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. I think we have covered question 6, so shall we just move on?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

We alluded to it before; that was about professional development time, you mentioned before that there are fewer days in Jersey that they get in the U.K. Do you mind just recapping what we said on that already in terms of what changes you see coming to that and how that would be implemented?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Well basically where we are is I am making my position clear. I think we need at least 2 more professional development days and I would like one of those days every other year to be committed to a professional conference where the entire profession can come together and look at some of the things we have been talking about: how is the assessment system working? What impact is it having on kids? We are changing the curriculum in terms of careers, let us have a conversation about it as a profession for the day. I think that needs to be one of those days. But I understand I cannot just wave a magic wand and make it happen. There are teachers' pay and conditions, I need to be respectful of that, and all we have done is open that conversation with the unions. I have to say the unions have been reasonable, sensible and rational about it and we have not fallen out yet. What we have not done is agree, so we will take that forward. All I can do is set up our position and argue the case and see where we go but I think it is a long-term conversation to be had. I just think it is an important conversation to be had; early days.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Last time we had a hearing you mentioned that the Music Service was undergoing change, so where are you now with that?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think we are done. I think we have completed what we set out to do and the Director will give you the detail.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, we had a Music Service I did not think was fit for purpose. It was working with a relatively small number of children. We had teachers teaching one instrument, we were not teaching enough ... the list goes on. So, last October I met with the entire service, explained to them what I think a music service should look like. There was general agreement with that. I went out and spent some time watching the service in place. So in the spring we consulted on a new service with a new set of objectives, a whole load of new job descriptions. The majority of the service reapplied for jobs because the old jobs went and new jobs came in and the new service is now in place and it was established from Easter. What we have done though is not launch the new service in its new guise until September so that we have most of the summer term on training and development so that colleagues could get into their new roles. So now we are focused on a much wider range of children, we are working much more closely with music departments, teachers are teaching families of instruments, so stringed instruments or woodwind instruments or brass instruments, not single. We are working with more children, there is more classroom work. It is quite a different service. It is a slightly smaller service; 3 members of staff left during that reorganisation. We have a new senior management team. All but one I think was new to their role. So it is a new-look service, with new objectives and it is up and running.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I remember when I was at school I did not find the Music Service particularly inspiring.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

So has that been something that has been looked at to say, right, looking at what the Music Service offers, how does it inspire kids to get involved in it and, in particular, what sort of emphasis is there on modern and contemporary music in trying to translate that to ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, I think there are 2 things there. I think that is a really good point about inspiration. I think one of the things we tried to do and, again, it is probably flushed through the curriculum, is give children more access to more music. Children get inspired when they are witnessing music being played live, as it were, so it is our consideration to allow more access to that. The other is really, I think your point about modern stuff, is if you went to one of the schools like Haute Vallee as an example, there is terrific access to more modern, whatever word I am looking at, instruments like the guitar and drums and so on and so forth. So the bands in particular in schools like ... and we do have a young individual here who ... I do not know if you have been in the ... have you been in the Music Service at school?

Ms. M. Bartram:

In primary school, yes.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Okay. Our thing is to really put instruments in the hands of children and that is the way they get inspired. So it is to give them more access to the materials and more access to listening to the stuff but ...

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, and we have £250,000 worth of brand new instruments which are available to young people from 1st September. They are brand new violins, brand new ... and so as children join the service they ... at the moment the instruments we were using are a little old. Some of the best violins in the world are very old, I get the point, but these are ...

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

They have seen better days.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, they have. Especially as young people or parents are contributing to the fees, we feel they should have really top-drawer instruments, so all those instruments are being put out to children from 1st September. If I am blunt, though, you are quite right, when you go and watch a youth orchestra play, you should feel a tingle down the back; it should be an emotional experience.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

When they play Prokofiev you should be startled, when they play Beethoven you should be inspired. We are not quite there yet. We have got some very, very talented players but Jersey ought to have top, top youth orchestras and youth performances and we are not there yet although ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

We have got some great teachers; fantastic music teachers.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

We have got some great teachers. Your point is exactly right. Its just, I think, got a bit stuck in its ways and we needed to liven it up and free people up. I have to say that some of the teachers in the service have come forward and they really stepped up to the plate. I am expecting big things of the Youth Service in the next 3 years. The other thing they have to do is address its accommodation. It is poor accommodation. The service is based in an old house basically, it looks like something out of Agatha Christie. I keep waiting for Poirot to arrive and point to the body. It is an old Victorian ... it is a beautiful house but it is not suitable for the Music Service. Their performance spaces and practice spaces are in Fort Regent, are damp and dingy and they are not right, so we are hoping to bring on new accommodation in 2 years' time.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

I said that when I was at school I did not find the Music Service itself inspiring, the one thing I did find inspiring was La Motte Street Youth Centre which, particularly when it comes to contemporary music, was providing a lot and was doing some really, really great work there.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, I agree.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

So in terms of looking at the overall picture of this, what worked and some conversations with La Motte Street ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

That continues at St. James. Yes, so the work that was being done at La Motte has now moved to St. James. But it is also worth mentioning that one of the things we have attempted to do as a department is open up our opportunities to be outside the private sector. We recently met with a philanthropist, several philanthropists; he has created a group. He is supported through the J.C.G.

(Jersey College for Girls) Trust, a lot to do with advancement of music. They are increasing that engagement, so you have got the outside people coming in helping us as well.

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Good.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay. Is that all?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay. I think we have covered question 8, have we not? Question 9, I wonder if the Minister could explain to the panel what problems are being experienced in affording school autonomy?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Okay. Well the Director and I have had a lot of discussion about this, probably because the word itself confused people from the outset I think and it has been subsequently translated into freedom for schools. But there are 3 areas that we are dealing with: one is the mind-set that previously existed about what autonomy meant; second is the engagement that we have discussed all the way through this talk today to do with the unions, particularly pay and conditions which I do not have a hold on, and the third is the learning and training that relates to what people believe is autonomy. So what the Director was referring to earlier we have some proponents, retiring heads in particular, who understand exactly what we are doing and it is bringing them in and suggesting that we work very closely so there is a mentoring situation that goes on with heads in schools so they fully understand what it is we would like from them and what they want to create themselves.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

We want to get this right. We want to get it right for Jersey. What we cannot do is just transplant U.K. practice here. So we are talking to the unions at the moment about where autonomy would stop. So, for example, in the U.K. a lot of the schools, about half of the schools are academies, so they can have different teachers' pay and conditions in their schools. We do not think that is a good idea in Jersey so we are talking here about, yes, we are going to produce certain freedoms but not to have everybody on different pay and conditions. That would not work in Jersey; it is too small a community. The curriculum, for example, if you are an academy in the U.K. you do not have to teach the National Curriculum. Well we think that curriculum is so important that whichever school you go to, you need to be studying about Jersey's history and heritage. So there

are certain things here that we think we will not free up, so it is not going to be as autonomous, if you like, as the U.K. and those are the things we want to get right. You talk about sticking points with the union, we are in agreement with the unions over these key areas and we are in agreement with the heads.

[11:15]

So we are doing this slowly and carefully. So the 4 priorities. This is the one where we are being most patient and spending most time to get it right and we need to be crystal clear on what this looks like in Jersey in Jersey's context. We could do a lot of damage if we get this wrong, so we want to make sure we get it absolutely right.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

I thought you were going to expand there, sorry.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

All I would say, it is probably early days at this point in time.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes. Sorry, you forget I talk all day on this so I thought I would spare you.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Just briefly, what have you identified as kind of the key areas which you have immediately focused on within that?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

In terms of where we would retain control?

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

There are 4 really. Two I have mentioned, so one is teachers' pay and conditions, the second is the curriculum, the third is safeguarding issues. We would have a standard set of safeguarding issues. The fourth is holidays. In the U.K. schools can free set them; however, we think in Jersey we need a single set of school holidays; it would be chaotic. As you know, we are quite interested in reshaping the academic year and talking to people about that. We have already written to schools to say we are freeing up inset days. We cannot do it till 2017 because the holidays have

been sent out and parents know them. So for the first time in 2017 schools will have freedom over when they have their training days. At the moment we set them and free those up. We would like to have a look at the structure of our year so that we have a different half term to the U.K. so the parents are not faced with ridiculously expensive flights to get away. So holidays I think; no good us having a discussion about the academic year and then schools deciding when we can have the holidays. So those are the 4 big ones that we would retain here in Jersey.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. Yes, the business plan talks about reducing administrative burdens on teachers and in addition to what you have already said today, is there anything else which is looking to be done in order to achieve this?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Well, we are ... sorry, Minister.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I was just going to say, this is one of those areas where people are working through the Lean process, if nothing else, but I think it has been fairly well covered in what we have said already in working with unions, the way we are adopting new practices in terms of the I.T. structure. I am not sure there is ... unless you have got ...

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Well one thing probably worth mentioning is we are looking to have a staff survey every year. The first one will be in September where we are going to ask the teachers to give us feedback. So this year it will just be teachers, next year will be teachers and teaching assistants, and there is a whole section there on workload: what are the things you think waste your time? What are the things that stop you planning your lessons? Give us some practical examples of what you think we can remove from you in terms of workload. I think that is the first thing. So rather than just getting union feedback or head teachers', have every single individual teacher tell us about their workload issues and then we can do something about it. We have agreed that survey with all unions and they have helped us write the questionnaires and that will be addressed to individual teachers privately. Interestingly, the feedback we have got is people prefer a paper copy of ... I assumed people would rather do it online but apparently our statistics people tell us that if you give people a paper copy of a survey, questionnaire, you are more likely to get it back. It surprises me. So we are going to do both. What we are encouraging schools to do, and most have agreed to do it, on the air show day they will free up half an hour of every teacher's time to complete their questionnaire and return it to us because we would like 100 per cent. So I will be quite happy to share that feedback with you. We should get from all our teachers their personal views on what it

is that makes their life difficult or easy and then we will try and respond to that. Because at the moment we talk about workload and it is a bit vague. We need to know precisely what it is that is slowing you up. So we will have that information and we will have it all analysed by mid-October. There are lots of sections in there and one of them is specifically on workload.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. Is there anything else you would like to add here?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

No.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

No? Okay. We have talked about question 11 already, I think, so shall we move on to question 12?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

How are you keeping libraries relevant in the I.T. age?

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Okay, I have got some facts and figures for you. I have just been checking them on my phone to make sure I have got them right because it is live data and it changes. So, we have had just over now 27,000 visits to the library's website which, as you know, was revamped and redeveloped a little while ago. Most of those visits are to do with online catalogue; that has been a real success those 27,000. Sadly what we do not know from those 27,000 is how many individuals. It does not tell us, it just tells the number of visits. There must be a cleverer way of finding out. Is that 6 people who are really keen ...

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Yes, 26,999 of them are not me because I have been on it once this year.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Okay. From those 27,000 visits we have had 5,034, as of this morning, downloads, so people are beginning to download things. I would be quite interested to compare that with the U.K. data but it seems significant. We now have free public WiFi available in the library which I am told by the librarians there is well used. People stepping inside to use the free WiFi ...

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I used it myself just the other day.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, and we have done that. So we have got 2 now open I.C.T. (Information and Communication Technologies) suites in the library; they are for drop-in sessions. This has been a year now, we have had 1,015 residents acquire the European Computer Driving Licence which is very basic I.T. skills, as you know, and 1,056 have used those drop-in sessions to do some online family history research. So, those are kind of the figures. I have to say these are quite recent developments. Ed Jewell, our chief librarian, joined us just over a year ago and he has had a transformational effect on Jersey. He is always coming forward with good ideas, is he not?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

The trouble is they tend to be good ideas so you cannot ignore them; they do need to be followed through.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I have been tasked along with him to go and see evidence of some of this that is happening in the U.K. So we are going to see, I think it is, this is sometime in September, Exeter and Birmingham to see what they have been doing because he wants me to witness some new advancements. I think he is very focused on the understanding that libraries do need to change in their concept. I was there the other day when the Guinness Book of Records was being done, just last weekend or the weekend before last, and it was full. Everything was being used: E.C.D.L. (European Computer Driving Licence), every computer was being used, the room was being used, students were in researching what they had to do for their exams, revising. We had a book challenge on and so I think we had 1,500 people through the doors just on that one day alone. So it is a very contemporary library in that sort of sense but the librarian does understand we need to move ourselves into a modern age, so he is quite focused on that.

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

Yes, a lot of development in the last year. Quite interested; it is a lovely space as well. It is a beautiful library. Very lucky. I went into the Guernsey one a few weeks ago and I realise now why Ed has come to Jersey. It is a much nicer library. Not that I am being childish but ...

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. One general question which we have got now which is just for the detail around what is happening with sport.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well it is still in its transitional point. Constable Pallett, as you will know, is heading up that area. We have just dealt with the Island Games; that took a big time. One of the delays in some of the stuff we have been doing, particularly on the digital side, was the Island Games got in the middle of it all. But we are still on track to discuss that within the Assembly in October and the idea is that we will transport that across back in January next year. So sport is still partly intrinsically part of the life of children in our schools and that will continue but the actual sport element of Education, Sport and Culture will move across shortly.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

How will that fit in with physical education when it goes?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well we are very fortunate in having a Chief Officer, Derek de la Haye, who has been a P.E. (Physical Education) teacher for his sins in the past and now works very closely with sport; most people identify him with sport. His heart will remain with the schools, so the discussions that he will have with both his Minister and Assistant Minister Pallett will relate directly to what we do in schools. We still retain some of the properties that are dealt with in the sporting sector and we still have a dialogue with them. I still play a role as an Assistant Minister in that with E.D.D. (Economic Development Department) so the dialogue will continue open all the way along.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Can you tell us what formal structure sport will take? Will it remain as just a delegatory responsibility to an Assistant Minister or will it take on another form?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I think there is a consideration that there will be a sporting body constructed outside of it. I do not have the detail of that. I think that is still to be ratified yet, so I do not have that at this point in time.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. Then as for sport comes its sister, what is happening with culture?

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

Well again we are still in the same position. The culture is moving across. I have got a good dialogue with Rod McLoughlin. I have been involved in culture, as you will know, for some time. Again, culture is very much a part of what is knitted into the curriculum through heritage or through music, as you have already discussed. We work quite closely with E.D.D. They may have a

different viewpoint on it but for our part we are still in that position where it will be discussed in the Assembly in October and moving across in January.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Okay, thank you. Is there anything else with that?

Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

No.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

No? Okay, so just before we come to the end of this hearing today I just want, as always, to give you the opportunity if there is anything that you think we have missed or have the wrong end of the stick on, I just want to invite you to make some closing comments.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I do not think we have anything that you may have missed unless you have got ...

Director of Education, Sport and Culture:

No. We have our business plan which you are familiar with. We are sticking to it, we are trying to remain focused. Lots of distractions in Jersey, as you will know better than me. We are trying to just focus on delivering those 4 key priorities and we are pretty well on track.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture:

I should probably raise the issue of student loans which you have not raised. We have got a workshop which will happen at the end of this month and that is to invite the public in to see if they have got any other ideas, to tell them where we are in the considerations. Another area that will happen during the break between now and coming back in September is we are working on a website which is predominantly Education's website to let people know what is happening. It is part of our transparency policy to let people know what is happening in the schools. Other than that, I do not have anything else to say. Thank you very much.

Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Thank you, and we wish you well with that. Brilliant. I shall close and end the hearing there. If I could ask members of the public immediately to withdraw from the room.

[11:27]