

STATES OF JERSEY

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

FRIDAY, 6th MARCH 2009

Panel:

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier of St. Saviour (Chairman)

Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier

Connétable G.F. Butcher of St. John

Ms. S. Power (Scrutiny Officer)

Mrs. E. Liddiard (Scrutiny Officer)

Witnesses:

Deputy J.G. Reed (Minister for Education, Sport and Culture)

Mr. M. Lundy (Director of Education, Sport and Culture)

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisssier of St. Saviour (Chairman):

I would like to welcome the Minister, the Director, the Assistant Director and members of the public, thank you very much, and the member of media - the traditional media I suppose. I would like to welcome them and of course members of the panel. We will name ourselves when I have spoken. There are 2 issues: one I have received a letter which was in broad terms similar to a letter I received last time. It was essentially asking whether the panel's remit covered looking into the circumstances governing suspensions and the implications of suspensions of staff. Now, as I made clear last time and I have made clear in a follow up correspondence which I have got no problem having published, the role of Scrutiny is not to investigate these issues, it is not to look into issues that are to do with individual, for example, disciplinary inquiries and so forth. It does not look into those issues. That was very clearly outlined in the initial policy setting it up. It has been subsequently reaffirmed by the codes that now govern it, and we can make those codes available to

anyone who is interested. That is not to say that where such issues of importance affect people, of course, obviously they should use whatever mechanisms exist, be they in the States system or be they in the judicial system or any other aspects of the political system. But that is absolutely clear and always has been distinctly so. I have to apologise for that but we will not be going there.

Mr. Dunn:

Is that the letter that I am aware of that has been sent? That I will know of from Mr. M.? Would that be that letter that you are referring to?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Yes, we have had a letter in regard to whether we will look at these issues and we do not basically. The best thing is for you to receive a code where this is outlined. I did write to you in some detail about the various --

Mr. Dunn:

I was just going to say, that letter was not about suspensions. That letter was about a follow up to undertakings that were given in the States Assembly that things would be done and that letter is written just to say that we are really asking if those things have been done.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Yes, it did spill over into that issue but the best thing to do, and oddly enough and maybe serendipitously, Mr. Dunn, there is a question in the States on that issue I understand so there will be a political follow up in that regard. There will be a

political follow up. The second issue is the videoing of meetings. Now, this has led to some interesting issues. There was a request made at the beginning of the last meeting to video the meeting and I did accede to that request. There has since been discussion in the Chairmen's Committee, which is the body that governs Scrutiny, as to this issue and it is fair to say it was a controversial issue and there were very strong views expressed on both sides. Interestingly enough, both sides called upon human rights in a sense to buttress their particular cases. So that was quite an interesting dilemma. Anyway, the end result of the Chairmen's Committee debate was that videoing would be permitted but it would be permitted only where the Chairman gave permission. Then having given that permission the witnesses would then have to accede to that request also. That was the policy we followed and that is the interim policy. But, having said that, there is no doubt there has been some very interesting issues raised about this and it has spilled over into further debates about the coverage of the States as a whole, the issues of televised coverage, the issues of who is or who is not accredited and they are valid issues quite frankly.

Deputy J.G. Reed of St. Ouen (Minster for Education, Sport and Culture):

Mr. Chairman, I am sorry to interrupt but we obviously have come here ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Sorry, James, I am going to be very quick but I thought because members of the public had raised these issues I would do a quick summation.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think that there is a time to deal with them and I would suggest that perhaps that could be dispensed with after.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Well, it was this meeting ... but anyway I am almost ready to finish, you will be glad to hear. So the end result was that the Chairmen's Committee will be approached to carry out a deeper study of this. It will probably be carried out, assuming it goes forward, by P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) and because it involves the privileges of the States it will be a States-wide debate. The whole issue of the how the States is covered, what mechanisms you use, how you bring in citizens of media if you do and so forth and so on. So it will become a proper policy debate. So at the moment we have that interim solution. End of speeches because, as the Minister so kindly reminded me, it is not my task here to give speeches but those issues were raised, they were raised in public and I felt that they did require an answer, Minister, so that is why. Okay, let us get the formal side of the Scrutiny hearing going, so we will get people to introduce themselves for the tape.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Deputy James Reed, Minister for Education, Sport and Culture.

Mr. M. Lundy (Director of Education, Sport and Culture):

Mario Lundy, Director of Education, Sport and Culture.

Connétable G.F. Butcher of St. John:

Graeme Butcher, Constable of St. John.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Roy Le Hérisier, Deputy of St. Saviour.

Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier:

Deputy Pitman, St. Helier No. 1.

Mrs. E. Liddiard (Scrutiny Officer):

Liz Liddiard, Scrutiny Officer.

Ms. S. Power (Scrutiny Officer):

Sam Power, Scrutiny Officer.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay, thank you very much. So we will start, and the first question ... well, I am not sure it is a question, it is simply that we would like a copy of your Sport Development and Outdoor Education Plan so we can have more information on your initiatives to increase participation and performance in sport and active preparation.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

We have brought copies of those documents for you.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Thank you, question answered. We will now move to question 2 from Deputy Pitman.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Thank you. The Minister highlighted the importance of physical activity in his election speech - I stress that is not his own physical activity within his speech - as it pertains to young people within the system. Could he explain to the panel how he proposes to achieve this in an already tight timetable?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Well, firstly, I intend to review the primary curriculum to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between skills, content, creative opportunities and physical activity because I do think that all of those are important. I also intend to explore ways in which we can use resources currently in our sports section to enhance provision in our schools. The curriculum currently allows about 2 hours for physical education for each pupil per week and thanks to the commitment of teachers and other adults, including - I would hasten to add - our Sports Development Officers, there are a significant number of opportunities to participate in after school activities. So I believe perhaps the biggest opportunity going forward is to review the delivery of primary physical education and after school sports.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Obesity in young people is a major issue, how does that 2 hours compare with U.K. (United Kingdom) counterparts? Does the Minister know that?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am told it is similar but perhaps my director might be able to add ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is the same. The Jersey curriculum is based on the U.K. curriculum with some modifications. The whole challenge of obesity, of course, is more than just exercise and one of the difficulties in Jersey is that there is not a statutory school meal service so there is not the equivalent of free school meals, there is not the equivalent of those types of arrangements that would provide for nutrition alongside exercise. The department is working collaboratively with Health and Social Services and trying to make sure that there is some recognition of this and some strategies to overcome this in the New Directions health policy. In terms of the development of the curriculum in sport, there has been a great deal of work this year in trying to enhance the primary ... or make arrangements for the future enhancement of the primary curriculum by utilising our resources in sport and plans are afoot to try to implement that but, as is inevitably the case, there are resourcing issues yet to be sorted.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Would you have arrived at any timetable to try and implement that?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It was not planned to implement this until September 2010. There are early indications that it might be possible to implement it earlier but we would not want to commit to that until we sorted out the resource issue.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

In terms of indicators, Mr. Director, like obesity levels, have you got any idea as to where we stand vis-à-vis the U.K.?

Mr. M. Lundy:

There is data on that. We do not hold the data, we have seen the data and we are working in partnership with Health and Social Services on this. So obviously the Medical Officer for Health.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

What does it say?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I am not the expert in the field but I think what it is telling us is that while we do not have the same problem that there is in the U.K. there has been an increase and if we were to be complacent then clearly we might have problems later on. So the important thing is to tackle this early and, as I say, our department is working with Health and Social Services on these issues.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Sorry, it is a slight diversion, but in terms, for example, of school meals, do you require contractors to offer a certain menu?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Well, not at the moment. We require them to adhere to certain standards but those standards need to be firmed up and agreed and there is a difficulty, of course, when

you have a private provider who is perhaps providing at one or 2 schools, they do not have the economies of scale, the private provider has not got the breadth of contract that would enable him to make the profits in order to deliver. But there is a school meals focus group that is made up of officers from the Department for Social Services and our own department, and the work of that group is being overseen by Dr. Geller and myself and the proposal - and some of this work has already happened - is to develop right throughout the primary schools the healthy school status award, and we have some primary schools that have made that level and we are working to bring the others on and to look at how we can improve nutritional standards, be they delivered by private providers, in-house providers or some combination of the 2. So there is a major piece of work on the go at the moment on that.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

They are really good initiatives, just picking up on the point with regard to the primary schools, we are focusing on the healthy living and healthy lifestyle and I have seen for myself that our young people are getting educated to understand the importance of eating well and physical exercise. So we are starting from, I believe, a good position. It is just that we would like to see things improve as everybody would.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Right, thank you.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Moving on, could the Minister outline his plans regarding the Fort Regent facility?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

The short answer is at the moment just carry on with business as usual. I am well aware that consideration has been given to the Fort over many, many, many years and a number of proposals have been brought forward to be considered. Currently the future of the Fort is being considered as part of the East of Albert regeneration project and Property Holdings is currently looking at potential options and opportunities for the site. I remain fully supportive of maintaining this site as a sports and leisure activity centre. However, I recognise to perhaps achieve the long-term solution some element of private public partnership may need to be entered into but that is really all the information I presently can provide because it is very much in its infancy.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Just to enlarge on that, would you agree that perhaps one of the biggest obstacles to progressing the Fort has been the variety of stakeholders involved? Obviously you are a new Minister but do you think that is an obstacle that has to be overcome in progressing some sort of coherent plan for the future.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think part of the obstacle has been overcome with the decision that all States property has been transferred to Jersey Property Holdings so now a more holistic approach can be used when we consider the future use of a whole variety of States property. That is the first point. Secondly, I suppose that with that comes a realisation that to improve and restructure and develop facilities, funding is required. It is an issue that certainly, although the property has been transferred, the funding to

provide for the upgrading and the improvements that I think we all would like to see are still to be addressed.

The Connétable of St. John:

Can I just ask you a question, Minister? What are your views on the swimming pool up at Fort Regent? There are lots of thoughts going around and public perception that it was only ever closed down to open up the one on ... so we could put something on the waterfront. But what is there obviously is not working with the funding demands that are going on down there on the waterfront.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Well, there are 2 points. I recognise the decision to close the Fort was made and subsequently a decision was made to replace it with a leisure pool on the waterfront. Part of the reason I believe, and maybe the Director will correct me, for the closure of the Fort was the high cost of maintenance and funding that was required to maintain it and continue it as a facility. The leisure pool did provide an opportunity not only to maintain a swimming pool but provide some sort of leisure element which was not provided at the Fort. With regards the present cost and the subsidy, if you like, that government is having to provide for the facility, all I can say is that I am informed it is comparable to other facilities in the U.K. bearing in mind, if you like, the overall population and the use of the pool. Equally, and I have not done the exercise, it is quite likely that if the Fort Regent pool had been maintained or retained as the current facility it could be argued that subsidies required for that pool would be similar to the amount that we are paying now. We are, however, as a department looking at the contracts that have been entered into with the private provider, as we are now

responsible for that particular area, and we will be making every effort not only to ensure that the States and the public get good value for money, but the right provision is provided and supplied for use.

Mr. M. Lundy:

If I could add a couple of points on that. The first thing is that there is a movement in the U.K. to make swimming more accessible to the public and therefore less costly. Some suggested that it might be free which means, of course, that it will not be breaking even let alone making any money. But generally we are told that public swimming pools make a loss in the region of £300,000 to £400,000 a year because they are community facilities and we recognise that. There are a number of reasons for Fort Regent being closed. Obviously the Minister has touched on the main one, this is a big issue with Fort Regent full stop really, is the cost of maintaining what is a property that is getting quite old now. Redeveloping it is a real challenge, partly because of its historical significance and we have produced, through EDAW, the consultancy group, a development brief which we put out into the marketplace with little success because the capital sums required to develop a site like Fort Regent were substantial at any time, regardless at a time like now. So it would probably have to be done in some sort of partnership and so you have to be able to attract those partners in some way. So that is where we are and Property Holdings have taken a view that there are a number of options that they would wish to pursue and are taking this forward on behalf of the States.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would just like to finally add that we certainly see ourselves, because we are obviously responsible for the administration of the property, as being - and would require to be - included in any proposals that are brought forward and discussed and considered by Jersey Property Holdings.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

If I could just ask one other point? I would be loathe to put words into your mouth but from you are saying about the moves in the U.K. to promote swimming, which I am sure would be really beneficial, would the department, the Minister, then be calling on the States to find some means to subsidise the cost of the swimming pool so that more of the public could use those facilities.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think that this is all part and parcel of the contract review, I believe, that there is, as always, a balance. We want to ensure that the public has the greatest benefit from the facility, mindful of the fact that there could be a cost involved. It is all of those issues, if you like, that we will be considering as we review the contract.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

But it is your inclination to think those costs are worth the States ...

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Honestly, I would love to say yes or no but unfortunately ...

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I would as well.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Unfortunately at the moment I have not had a briefing or any close look at any documents relating to the waterfront leisure pool so it would be wrong for me to comment further.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Who is carrying out this review, by the way, Minister?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

It will be my department's staff together with the provider.

Mr. M. Lundy:

A feasibility study into the cost of pre-swimming was conducted, I think, in response to a States question about a year ago. I cannot remember the detail of it but one of the things you have to consider is the increased expense per head given the size of the population. So, I mean, it can be quite a costly thing to deliver.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay. The other ... sorry, very quick, there was a statement made by the Minister for Economic Development on the development of the Fort. Were you in the loop in terms of working with your ministerial colleagues?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am not sure how that comment came about, whether it was an off the cuff remark but I can tell you that no discussions have taken place between the Economic Development Minister and myself regarding the creation of a conference centre at the Fort.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay. We will move on, Graeme.

The Connétable of St. John:

What are the department's plans with regards to funding and support for other sports facilities around the Island that may be struggling?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am aware of the Constable of St. John's particular situation although, unfortunately, I have no answers for that particular issue. But generally clubs and associations can access support for activity development through our sports development officers. We also provide some support for travel which can be accessed through the Sports Advisory Council, which holds an annual budget of approximately £190,000. In relation to facilities, the department did have access to community development funding from lottery funds which enabled it to operate as a pound for pound scheme with clubs and associations looking to develop their facilities. Unfortunately this no longer exists and therefore we need to review how we fund and manage our sporting facilities. Also, and again it is linked to all other property, our sporting facilities now come under the responsibility of Jersey Property Holdings and all I can tell you is there are general concerns, not only raised by our department but equally by States

Members, over the ability to maintain our facilities at the standard that we would expect. As a department, I see our role in working closely with Jersey Property Holdings to try and ensure that, one, our facilities are maintained, that they are properly utilised and that we can maximise the benefit from them.

The Connétable of St. John:

Obviously from the area I am talking about, the primary school there at St. John uses the facility up at St. John as much as it possibly can and maybe even more but the facility is, shall we say, a little cash strapped and could do with an injection of some capital, even in terms of just maintenance.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I do appreciate that and I think that there is a genuine desire to work with all clubs and associations and organisations to see where we may be able to help, even if it is simply on advice. I am sure the department's door would be open to you or to anybody else.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay, thank you. This is a fairly big question so I am sure you will have a summary to help us along. What are the Minister's power in relation to (a) the Jersey Heritage Trust and (b) the Jersey Arts Trust?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

From what I understand to date, as Minister for Education, Sport and Culture, my powers and responsibilities are to act as the representative of the States who are

indeed the major sponsors of these organisations and to act as their champion in the States Chamber.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

So there was, as we know, the contentious issue - I have to bring it up - around the DUKWs, for example. Would you think, as a Minister, you have the right to intervene if there was evidence that it had apparently been - apparently - a degree of unwise purchasing going on?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think we have got to recognise what is ... maybe it is for me to understand the reasons why these trusts were created, and part of the reason was to ensure that they operated at arm's length. They were given roles and responsibilities, they are required to deliver certain services and for that the money was granted to them. I do not see that either myself nor my department should be taking a hands on approach to the day-to-day management and responsibilities of those trusts otherwise it seems pretty pointless in having the trust in the first place.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

So if there was an allegation, for example, that DUKWs had been bought and this had seriously affected the budget of an organisation and then down the road you have got a request for more money from the trust because it was struggling, how would you handle that?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Well, the first thing is that we have partnership agreements in place and there are roles and responsibilities that are expected from both parties. Certainly the first thing is that we expect all trusts to provide annual accounts. With regards to the way that they propose to spend their money, we would expect them to produce a business plan at the beginning of the year to demonstrate what their plans are for the year and how they propose to manage the funds available to them. I would hasten to point out that whereas in many cases, and I am picking up Jersey Heritage as a for instance, most heritage trusts rely on an income that is equivalent to about a quarter of the amount of funds that they can generate themselves ... sorry, let me start again. The total funding of general trusts, similar to the Heritage Trust, would be a quarter funded from private source and income, three-quarters from government. Presently Jersey Heritage contribute 42 per cent to the overall grant in the sum of the total amount that is available to them. That is a terrific amount so we should not suggest that either Jersey Heritage Trust or perhaps even other trusts are cash rich. Indeed, I believe that there is a responsibility on behalf of government to ensure that if we choose to promote our cultural heritage then it is necessary that we provide sufficient funding for it.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay. On the issue ... again, I do not know if you can advise me, Mr. Minister, but we are told that one of the trusts basically employs staff on States conditions of service but it is able to award its own pay awards, for example - which does not quite seem logical - and the other trust does not employ staff on States conditions of service. Are you aware of that apparent discrepancy?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I am aware that certain trusts have slightly different arrangements. I cannot explain or give you the reasons why those arrangements have developed. It could be, and I am perhaps guessing, that a trust took over some responsibility that was carried out previously by the States and therefore would have taken over responsibility of the staff and therefore all the conditions that relate to a States employee.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think it is not that the trust would employ on States salaries and conditions of services, it may be that the trust has chosen to emulate States salaries and conditions of service and that would be a choice that the trust would make. I think the whole concept of managing arm's length bodies is one that is often misunderstood. If you are going to take responsibility for the management of the service, why would you have an arm's length body? So I think the points that you raise are very pertinent. How do you manage a situation where a trust is doing something that that you do not particularly like? I think the issue is best addressed through fairly robust partnership agreements, service level agreements, a business plan that is robust, and accountability arrangements such that where something has happened that you hold the trust to account. Now, in holding a trust to account it does not necessarily mean that you would automatically restrict their funding, although that might be an option, but what one would want to do is to hold the trust to account in such a way as you did not affect the service that is given the public.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Exactly. Exactly.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay. But do you think ... in fact, it would be useful if you could send us that information about who gets a total mirror of States conditions and who does not.

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think that would be ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Surely within such a small society that must set up tension, I would have thought.

Mr. M. Lundy:

Well, again, with an arm's length body I think it would be for the arm's length body to provide you with that information and I am sure you would probably at some stage wish to talk to the arm's length bodies, apart from government. But what we can do is we can send you details of all partnership arrangements and what we can also say is that relatively speaking Jersey is quite new to working with arm's length bodies and needs to develop and refine and hone its arrangements and to work with the organisations themselves to ensure that they have got robust business planning in place and arrangements for demonstrating the giving value for money.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Can I just add one last point. With regards to their annual accounts, they are all public documents, in the public domain so that may be an area where you might find the information you require.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay, thank you, Mr. Minister. Just to wrap up that area, unless my co-questioners have views, although we have had an explanation of what is the ideal arm's length arrangement, can you tell us if you have any priorities? You did mention, for example, running a Jersey week to enhance pride in Jersey culture which in a way would influence the trust, of course?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think there is a number of different strands, if you like, which link together to form perhaps an overall priority. One is our cultural state. I am very clear that there are some major issues that need to be addressed across all of our cultural state, and I include all our heritage sites in that. A long-term solution, must be found. Again, I recognise it is not going to be easy but it is a priority. Secondly, we need to ensure that the trust are able to deliver the services that the public require and we will work very closely with them to provide those services. It also should be noted that when the States approved the cultural strategy they did not approve the funding that was required to go with it. It is a bit like an empty shell. The challenge for both myself, the organisations and the department is to review or update the cultural strategy, look at all the aims and objectives that are linked to it, and perhaps re-evaluate those aims and look to phasing them. Obviously the initial step would be to look at what we can do within existing resources and the working with other departments, because I do think there are other opportunities to further our cultural heritage, in the broadest sense of the word, under the tourism banner. We promote on almost every tourism leaflet part of our heritage and yet unlike the Isle of Man which ... I had a meeting with an individual today, one of the individuals from the Isle of Man, they had a

rebranding and focus that placed and created a sort of culture tourism aspect which surrounds and enhances all their natural heritage, whether it is the environment, the buildings and even their local identity. I think, if you like, those are perhaps the priorities, if you can call them that, that I would like to address in the coming months and perhaps years.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

When you talk of branding you are not hopefully advocating another £250,000 for a flying banana or ...?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Absolutely not. The branding, and perhaps I used the wrong word, is an improved focus that I would like to see that draws in our national trust and Jersey Heritage Trust and all the other main cultural organisations to combine to form - for want of a better word - a better package.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

To read in between the lines there, would you be saying then that really the States needs to give more consideration and financial support to valuing our heritage and perhaps not so much promotion just to finance?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think there is a balance to be struck. People have so many different views of culture that it is difficult to promote. I think my challenge, being supposed to be the champion for culture within the States, is to get the message across that culture and

our own heritage and our identity is extremely important and benefits can be derived from it, even - dare I say - economic as well as all the social aspects that some of us perhaps are aware of. So I think that is the challenge that is, if you like, the gauntlet that I wish to perhaps throw down to the States and departments that we need to refocus and generate a pride in who we are, rather than perhaps looking across to others and suggesting that everybody else does it better.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Thank you, Minister. We will move to finance now. Graeme will champion the finance.

The Connétable of St. John:

Minister, what is your base to supporting the planning for effective management of forecast changes to pupil numbers without impacting the quality of provision?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Can I ask my Director to start?

The Connétable of St. John:

Of course you can.

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is essentially an administrative issue in the sense that we have got to make sure that we are fully aware of any potential problems that we may face in either surplus or reduced capacity. So we manage our predictions or we maintain predictions at the

moment up until 2020. I cannot tell you how we accurately predict the birth rate of pupils who are not yet born but I understand there is a formula that is proven to be quite accurate. Then we review these predictions annually and if there are any changes we take account of those. There has been changes in the last couple of years, you will have heard of the challenge of falling pupil numbers. In actual fact the birth rate last year increased by 11.1 per cent which is another 100 children coming into the primary phase in 4 years' time. It increased the year before. So it is important to keep a handle on these predictions and bring them up to date each year. Then we look at the system. It is difficult to tell where the children are going to be when they are coming into the schools, so it is not easy to maintain across the school system. We look at teacher pupil ratios, we look at class sizes, we look at forms of entry and one of the strategies that we have used to manage some of the form has been to close a form of entry, so for example at Rouge Bouillon School we closed a form of entry there, and we also closed a form of entry at Samares but subsequently had to reopen it because the numbers came back up. Another strategy that we have used in the past is the amalgamation of 2 schools into one, so for example, St. Mark's and La Pouquelaye School were amalgamated into one 2 form entry school and of course the savings there are on the fixed costs. So you are not taking anything away from the education of the children, you are maintaining the quality, you are reducing the fixed costs of providing the service and that is the key to maintaining quality as you make modifications to the system.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Just to pick up on perhaps an opportunity that exists if pupil numbers reduce, is that I am certainly well aware of the benefits of early intervention and providing additional

support to especially children in primary school to deal with some of the more difficult issues. So it could be that if there were to be falling numbers, and even if there was not in fairness, we need to be addressing that particular issue. We need to be providing and guiding the young people, especially those perhaps from dysfunctional families that have certain difficulties, albeit some of them just temporary, to provide that little bit of additional assistance early on to enable them to fully benefit from their education.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Any implications for sixth forms?

Mr. M. Lundy:

There is inevitably an implication for the sixth formers as the numbers move through and strategies that we have used in the last couple of years, quite effectively, this year probably more so than ever before, is collaboration between the sixth forms. So we currently have more students studying outside their home institution than ever before. So if there are a shortage of subjects or if they are subjects where, you know, there are a shortage of students, in a sense, there is nothing to prevent some of the sixth form providers putting numbers together to make up a class and therefore reducing the cost of the course without affecting quality.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

That is a very broad question which we are obviously going to return to, I would have thought, in Scrutiny. But carrying straight on we will move to the school strategy with Trevor.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Indeed. What progress has been made in relation to developing a skills strategy for the Island as part of the Skills Executive with other States departments? Importantly how will this impact the departmental budget?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Firstly, an employer led skills board has been formed under the chairmanship of Richard Plaster and the resources from the 3 key States departments have been identified and secured. The board has met on 4 occasions and has had an initial meeting with the 3 Ministers, of whom I am one, who form the Skills Executive. The present Chair of the Executive is Deputy Ian Gorst, who is the Social Security Minister. We have met early in January for the first time and a further meeting will take place on 12 March, which is next week, and at this meeting we are expecting the Chairman of the Skills Board to present his business plan for approval by the Executive. This plan will describe the board's priorities for actions during 2009 based on some high level guidance that has been given by the Skills Executive.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

We all know that with child protection it was said that the corporate board did not work. Now we have all got our explanations as to why it perhaps did not work, but do you feel running such a function as this one with 3 politicians at the head, Mr. Minister, it is going to be effective? It is going to be fast? Because the economy is deteriorating as we speak, is it not?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would hope that it would be effective. Certainly it is my intention to ensure that that is the case and I am sure I can speak on behalf of the other 2 Ministers that they are equally determined that we provide a greater focus on the skills issue. We equally are supported by a very good skills board which is employer led. So we have a business and commercial aspect to that skills board which will help to guide us and direct use, hopefully, to the areas where the skills are required. Equally we have got our career advisers who are working quite closely with the Skills Board and the Executive to again follow through with the need, highlighted by business, let us say, so that we can direct our youngsters to be trained in particular areas. Maybe my Director will add a number of comments on this or put me right if I say anything wrong. But it was decided that the funds for apprenticeship schemes and training should be not only ring-fenced but, in many respects, managed and looked after, if you like, by our department. So there is a greater connectivity to, one, money and secondly to the action because ultimately we, as a department, are responsible for the most part of providing training opportunities for our local population. One would expect with that arrangement we have the right to believe that we can deliver on our objectives.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Mr. Minister and Director, will you be able to say to places like Highlands College and some of the secondary schools: “You really have to change your curriculum offerings. They do not meet what we perceive to be the economic and vocational needs of the Island.” Will you have that ability?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think we spoke briefly at the last Scrutiny hearing about the new funding arrangements with Highlands College which has moved from giving them a sum of money and them determining exactly how to use it, to us breaking it down into a funding formula where we have identified what the money goes into the college for. So there is an opportunity to lever change, bearing in mind of course that change in an institution that size can take up to 3 years to shift from one course to another. So that capacity now exists. That capacity exists to a certain extent in schools, so yes there is a greater opportunity now, more than ever before, to influence the direction of institutions like Highlands College.

The Deputy of St. Owen:

Just to pick up on one last point, and we come to the here and now and the issues that the Island, and perhaps the world, are facing with the economic downturn. We are well aware that there could be quite an immediate need in the next 6-8 months for students, perhaps, choosing to stay on at school because of the lack of job opportunities and other individuals looking to seek retraining and improvement of skills. The Skills Executive have been in discussion with the Council of Ministers and the Treasury Minister to flag up this issue because one of the areas that funding, and it is quite clear that there could be a need for increased funding in the short-term to manage this issue. This could be provided through the stabilisation fund that was set up for such a purpose.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

That takes us back to the second part of the question, the impact on your departmental budget.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Initially we believe that there will be no impact. The important thing is to ensure that the resources currently available are used to best effect. I think the Director has already suggested that we have looked at funding of Highlands and so on and so forth. There is a job to do in co-ordinating the apprenticeship schemes and training initiatives that have been carried out across the departments and that is something that we look forward to doing.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

If you feel the need for increased funding from the stabilisation fund, is that a move that you are going to make to your ministerial colleagues?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would suggest it is already a move we have made. We have identified, together with my department, the possible need for additional sums of money.

Mr. M. Lundy:

This will feature in the business plan and I can give you a practical example of how it might work. The last time we experienced a recession, although it was not as perhaps long(?) as it could be this time around, there was an increase in the number of young people leaving school unable to get a job and therefore seeking a place at Highlands College or something similar. The department developed a youth training scheme. So that is a simple example of something that might feature in the plan. This plan is already being put together at this moment and I guess it will probably be

presented to the Skills Executive at the next meeting. So arrangements are in place for a youth training scheme and a number of other initiatives like that, including initiatives to retrain people who are currently in employment and might need to use the skills that they have got but in a slightly different context and need some sort of on the job training to be able to adapt quickly.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

We will be also aiming to work with businesses to see whether or not, as the individuals develop their skills, they can have some form of work experience that is linked to that training.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay, thank you. Carrying right on, so we may possibly spill over by a few minutes, a slightly narrower question. Within resource allocation in the business plan it mentions that the Council of Ministers has approved the allocation of funds required for the introduction of a banded funding methodology for Mont a L'Abbe School based on level and need. Can the Minister provide more information on this methodology and whether this will satisfy the increased funding demands from that school?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

As you rightly say, the Council of Ministers agreed the allocation of additional funding which amounted to £370,000 in 2009 for the introduction of this banded funding methodology for Mont a Le'Abbe School. It was based on the level of need because it was recognised that due to advances in medical science more children are

being born with severe profound and/or multiple learning difficulties. Equally - and it is a good thing, I hasten to add - they are living longer. All of that combined required the additional resources being made available to the school so that they could properly cater for these young children, and indeed help to support indirectly their parents. In addition, more children are remaining at school between the ages of 16 and 18. So there was equally a pressure at that end. The funding is based on 4 levels of need: complex high dependency, profound and multiple learning difficulties, severe communication learning difficulties and severe development difficulties. They are wonderful words but to understand how those needs translate I would invite anyone to visit the school and meet these youngsters. The funding provided ensures that some flexibility can be applied to meet the needs of the current population at the school and, being formula funded, any increase in the school population can be catered for. However, the additional funding would be required to be allocated by the States if the need arose.

The Connétable of St. John:

Last year, Minister, obviously I was on the panel that did a review and we did visit the school and they do a fantastic job up there. But I think £370,000 was found last year, was it not, because they had severe funding difficulties?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

For 2009.

The Connétable of St. John:

All of a sudden when a review was going on there was £370,000 found from within your own budget. Is that not likely to be the case for the future or ...

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Before my Director fills in the gaps, we are there to provide support for those most in need and clearly some difficult decisions sometimes have to be made about where we prioritise the resources available. We accept that at times we need to. It is not easy because there will be another individual or other individuals that will cry foul that their funding has been reduced. In that particular case, and I think more detail will be provided by the Director, that is basically what the department chose to do.

Mr. M. Lundy:

We were able to do that during the course of that year because the funding that was found was based on slippage both in appointments and on projects that had slipped back, so they had slipped back to a point where we said: "Well, we will not do it this year, we will make sure that money goes to Mont a L'Abbe" some prioritisation but that money could not be sustained.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay, thank you. We now come to the topic of school suspensions and Trevor will lead.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Indeed. Could the Minister clarify, have suspension rates substantially increased in recent years within our schools?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

There has been an increase in suspensions, particularly in the academic year 2007/2008. However, as I said I think in answer to an earlier question asked in the States, these figures remain comparable to the U.K. especially in relation to fixed term suspensions. I would like to add that it is important to note that permanent exclusion or suspension is rarely used in Jersey and this inevitably will have an impact on the number of fixed term suspensions, which is the number that one would see and have seen as provided by us for the States.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Do those suspensions vary greatly from school to school? If so, why?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I do not believe that the variations are significant. However, variations are inevitable dependent on the context of the school whether this is a primary or secondary school, selective or non selective, fee paying or non fee paying. Even within these groups there is a variation which depends on the cohort of pupils at any one time and the school's capacity to meet the needs of those students. What I can say is that where there are variations, and perhaps greater than one would initially expect, the issue is flagged up to the department and the department then works with the school to identify the appropriate strategies for intervention and support.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

So what you are saying, Mr. Minister, is there is no school that is sort of significantly out of kilter with the rest, is that correct?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Each year there is a school that probably has a few more and there are, on occasions, schools that are significantly more than the rest. I think the important thing is that that is quickly recognised and challenged. When it is challenged obviously you are taking kind of a number of things, the context of the school, the policies that are in place, the application of those policies, the management of the school, the staffing at that point in time and the degree of challenge from any one cohort, and I think anybody who has worked in education will know that you have years which are more challenging than others. So, yes, there have been differences and some schools have had significantly more. That was the case, I think, in 2007 and the school that we are talking about brought it figures into line. So it is not as if there is a trend that is going like this, it tends to go a little like this.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Why did that school fall out of kilter with the rest? What were the reasons?

Mr. M. Lundy:

For the reasons that I mentioned earlier on, could be the around about context, could be the challenge of the cohort. When you look at it, sometimes you are seeing - given the numbers we are talking about - a fairly small group of students who are repeatedly suspended for repeated infractions and that can adversely affect the perception of the school. But there is another way to look at it, and the other way to look at it is that in

some U.K. authorities those youngsters would have been expelled. So suspension is often used as a sanction more often than not. Occasionally it is used to give some relief both for the student and the school, some distance so that issues can be sorted out, and sometimes to give the student a fresh start so that you can keep them in education. So the real figures about this that really should be of consequence are how many young people are out of education at any one time in Jersey? There are very, very few children who are out of education and any who would be out for other reasons.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

How many are there on average?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I do not have that figure to hand. But we would be making arrangements for any young person who could not be educated at school so there are a range of alternative facilities and alternative strategies for those young people but the aim is to ensure the continuity of education for everybody.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Can I just take on from that? Certainly in my own experience of working in education in Leicester some years ago, suspensions and of course permanent exclusion then created huge problems for those young people getting their education, is the Minister and the department quite confident with our own suspension system those young people are still getting adequate input education wise?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Absolutely. I think this is one of the emphases that we place on the schools and with our support ensure that the proper provision is provided to the youngsters, because we hold their education as absolutely of the utmost importance.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

If it is multiple suspensions, though, how does the department go about ensuring it?

Mr. M. Lundy:

We are confident that arrangements are put in place to support the education, we cannot be confident that the arrangements are being taken up because obviously there are a number of things that you could do. If it is a short suspension for a day or 2 you can provide some directed work for the young person, a project to do at home. The young person may choose not to do it. So you cannot be confident that the education of the young person is consistent at that point in time but you can be confident that the arrangements are put in place. I think one of the things that we have recognised in the department, the Minister has recognised, is that our guidance to schools on managing the lead up to suspensions, managing the suspensions process needs to be developed further. There are all sorts of layers in place in local authorities in the U.K. to manage this because it is such a significant problem and it has not been a problem to the same extent in Jersey but as there has been a slight increase then it is important that we recognise that and make sure our arrangements are robust.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

We are not going to do language provision, sorry about that, in schools because Deputy Tadier, who is the lead on that is, in fact, using your facilities at Les Quennevais this afternoon on the school marathon. So we will come to implementation of the *Williamson Report*. We know that Health and Social Services are the lead Ministry here but could you outline how your department is involved?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Absolutely involved because part of the main thrust of the *Williamson Report* is the development of the children's plan, and we are very much party to that. We are in the initial stages of looking and considering the *Williamson Report* in detail and our aim will be to work with the other departments, including obviously the Health Minister in particular, to move things forward.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Will they take the lead or will you work as a peer department with them, so to speak? Who will physically take the lead in implementing it?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I believe that in some areas there will be a shared responsibility and it has been recognised because in the *Williamson Report* there was much discussion given to whether a Children's Minister should be appointed, or perhaps the position should be created, however there was many reasons given why that was not the best route. Subsequently I am aware that the Health Minister has nominated one of his Assistant Ministers to oversee this particular area. In my view, to avoid perhaps some of the failings of the past with the Children's Executive and the co-ordinated approach

which some would suggest did not work or did not work as well as it should have, my view is that this needs to be addressed and I will be seeking some form of clear written partnership agreements to be developed which clearly outline each department's and each Minister's role and accountability and the services that each department is expecting from one another. I think in that way you will have a far clearer form of accountability and traceability, if you like, which will identify much quicker issues that may develop.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

I am sure we are going to revisit that because that is obviously a big issue. We will now come to the issue of school inspections. Trevor.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Can the Minister advise the panel of the current policy regarding the inspection of schools? I will leave it there for this point.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

As this is an area that presently I know very little about would you mind if I asked my Director just to answer the question on my behalf?

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Not at all.

Mr. M. Lundy:

The arrangements for inspection of schools have changed significantly since the demise Her Majesty's Inspector and the beginning of Ofsted in the U.K. At that point in time Jersey went for a self evaluation model that was based on the school evaluating itself and then an external team coming in to look at what they had done. Effectively that amounted to 2 inspections a year. So the arrangements have changed. The responsibility for school evaluation, the planning of it, rests with the school but the department has an expectation that it will be done. So the school agrees a schedule of evaluation with the department and the evaluations are carried out by an independent external. So while we do not use an independent body, such as Ofsted for very good reasons, it would be expensive for us to maintain our own independent inspection agency, we do use Ofsted trend inspectors who come in in an independent capacity and the schools themselves, as I say, have the benefit from this because the evaluation process is ongoing as opposed to once every 4 years. There is real strength in that because the once every 4 years can turn into a dog and pony show for one week which then subsequently can take a fair amount of energy from the school, whereas the process of continuous evaluation leads to continuous improvement. So, for example, last year across the Island there were 27 separate evaluations going on in schools with independent people conducting them, whereas with an inspection agency the cost would be probably 10 times as much and you could only manage 4 full schools a year.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

When you say separate evaluations, and I was aware of these from the board I was on, do you mean they are looking at specific teaching disciplines? Is there anyone in this

process who is saying the overall management of the school is X and Y and we really need to make some changes or is it all sort of segmented? I cannot quite ...

Mr. M. Lundy:

That would be one of the segments. So the school would be broken into aspects. So if you had concerns about leadership and management in the school or if you felt it had not been evaluated for some time, that would be one of the aspects that you would want to have evaluated. Alongside this, as of 1st January this year, we have developed a professional partnering arrangement where an adviser at the department has a responsibility for a cluster of schools and the adviser will now play a greater role in determining exactly what aspects of the school will be subject to evaluation. It will be agreed between the school and the adviser and if the school is a governing body, between the school, the adviser and the governing body. Of course over a period of time, and we are looking at 3 years at the moment, we would expect every aspect of the school to have been evaluated so at the end of 3 years you had a summit of documents about the performance of the school which is conducted over an extended period of time rather than a snapshot which is conducted over a week.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Sorry, just to pitch in there. Maybe it is not relevant but there is an expectation and a role that the Board of Governors needs to fulfil. You talk about the oversight of the school but that, I would suggest, is partly the responsibility of the governors to ensure that the provision of service is and does meet the right standard. If it does not they should be seeking solutions within that school.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Apologies if I am missing the point but you talked of independent individuals not agencies. Now to my mind the problem in the past with self validation ... Education professionals are no different to anyone else. We all have links to the U.K. or whatever, we will know people. What is in place to stop me inviting you along to evaluate my school because you know I am a good bloke and doing a great job?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Because you do not get to choose who comes.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

That is what I would like to clarify.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Can you assure us that that is the case?

Mr. M. Lundy:

It is the case.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

There has been talk that people are being invited in who are essentially old friends of current heads of an establishment.

Mr. M. Lundy:

It depends on the role. If you are bringing somebody in on an advisory capacity, it is absolutely fine for the school to invite someone in who they have got a good working relationship with. If you are bringing someone in to evaluate in an inspection capacity then it would be usual for the school ... and we maintain a contract with an agency in the U.K. that provides us with inspectors, so we simply look at what the need is and if, for example, it is an evaluation of leadership in management then our professional partners and schools and colleges team will go to the contractor in the U.K. and say: "Can you give me someone to do ..." and we will look at the C.V.s (curriculum vitae) and determine the best person to do it but usually there will not be that close relationship or that cosiness.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

You do take steps to ensure it does not exist?

Mr. M. Lundy:

Yes. Yes.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Okay, that answers the question.

The Connétable of St. John:

Can I just ask a quick question regarding the youth service? Can you explain the management structure of the youth service, i.e. front line staff to managers, what is the ratio there?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Can we provide you with a diagram which perhaps shows the present management structure that exists within the department?

Mr. M. Lundy:

This is the question that you asked us the last time that we came. The point that we made is that it has been difficult over the years to appoint a principal youth officer from on-Island. There has not been a tremendous response so the management structure is 2-fold. It is about making sure that the youth service functions as it should but it is also about ensuring that there is proper succession planning. You asked at the last meeting if we had taken account of any research in the U.K. in developing this structure and I said that I would find out. The answer is no we did not.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay. As my colleague the Constable said, have you investigated the ratios? Apparently, and obviously you can confirm this, it is about 2.5 frontline workers to each manager. Now, I know the managers apparently have some non managerial tasks that they do but that seems a very sort of excessive ratio, does it not, to a lay person?

Mr. M. Lundy:

I think we answered the question last time by saying rather than micro-managing the youth service, we had an inspection of the youth service. I think the inspection of the youth service had commented on the management of the service, its effectiveness, the

fact that its morale had risen considerably. So if you look at that you would have to deduce that the current management structure of the youth service has moved it on. That does not mean that we would not be challenging the youth service on its continued performance and, indeed, there are a number of recommendations that come out of that report which the youth service have been asked to draw up action plans to address and when they have done so they will be presented to the senior management team and the Minister.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Would you say that the natural assumption that morale, et cetera, has increased means that something is cost effective? I do not think that is a natural assumption.

Mr. M. Lundy:

That is not the conclusion that we would be drawing from it. The conclusion that we are drawing is that morale is increased, morale has improved. One of the things you would note from the recommendations of the youth service is that one of the things that they now need to do is make some connection between the investment that they make in youth work and the outcome so that they are able to give some indication of clear value for money. Now that is one of the recommendations and that is something we would expect the youth service to respond to in their action plan.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Just to pick up on what my colleague asked and you stressed yourself, it has always been a problem to appoint a principal youth officer from within Jersey, are you

hopeful that might change in the future? Are you hopeful that strength is in place now.

Mr. M. Lundy:

What we are hopeful ... no, we are more than hopeful. What we are sure of is that there are programmes in place to develop people, to give them the opportunity to compete for those posts but, clearly, one would have to be successful in competing in order to secure the post.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

One thing just to pick up on, on perhaps a secondary issue, is that I am well aware that we are presently trying to recruit youth workers, qualified youth workers, to bolster the provision of the service that we currently have, especially now that we are entering into partnership agreements with the parishes. It certainly looks likely that we will have to seek a (j) category individual to fulfil one of the positions because although we have advertised quite extensively we have been unable to attract any individual.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

I know the Constable was mentioning before the meeting about St. John, I will not push it now, they are waiting for their person apparently.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Absolutely.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Do you keep track of young people who go to university?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Yes, we were quite fortunate. We have recently managed to, for want of a better word, grab an individual that is about to or just finished their training and achieved the qualifications necessary to fulfil a position. I believe they have been directed to one of the other country parishes because they were a higher priority, I am afraid, than St. John and St. Ouen, I would say.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

He is not allowed to use the meeting for personal cases but he has done quite a good job of that. Okay, I will put a line under that and we now come to our very, very final question. I wonder if, briefly, the Minister could tell us what are the major issues he personally, from his reading of the situation in the department, wishes to progress in the short and medium term?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I have a list here of about 20 but I will try and condense it to about 4 or 5. One, and I think I have a great opportunity that is being presented to me by the previous Minister and the department in that we are in the process of developing a 10 year strategy plan for the whole department in order to provide a clear framework to guide the future direction of the service. That allows me to basically look at everything and anything which is terrific. One area I would particularly like to look at, and I was made aware of it a number of years ago, is the lack of employment opportunities for those with

learning difficulties and special needs. I am determined, absolutely determined, to try and work with my partners in Social Security to address this particular area. I want to, as I have already said, work with the Children's Executive in developing the children's plan. I think that is an exciting opportunity, not just for the looked after children, the most vulnerable, but holistically encompassing all our young people who I really do want to engage more in the community. Finally, and on the same sort of note, is that I want to look at or take a review of all policies that our department is implementing to ensure that we aim for a greater social inclusion of all young people in our community, obviously I mentioned those with learning difficulties and special needs but I also believe there are another group of youngsters who I call the hard to reach group - they probably would not say that, they are just enjoying themselves on their own - I would like to engage with them and include them in some of the decision making that the rest of the community takes part in. The youth forum is a particular area that I want to see developed. Then finally, just to underline the fact, we need to start dealing with our cultural issues and the funding pressures that exist in that particular ...

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Thank you, Minister. I ask my 2 co-questioners if they have anything.

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I would say that covers this year, what about the rest of the years?

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay, thank you, Minister, for that. That, in a sense, finishes our sort of broad survey. We will obviously now be moving to more focused reports, the first of which is Fort Regent and we will also be looking at political education and suspension policy as well.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Just as a comment, Chairman, I am a little bit concerned that you will be seeking answers from us as a department on Fort Regent that we just do not have. The more appropriate or certainly the department that must be included in any review would be Jersey Property Holdings.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

I think that is a valid point and we did have a communication to that effect and our feeling was we would still take the lead but clearly we would have to call in people from other areas, like the Minister for Economic Development who has got ideas about conference centres. Yes.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Great.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

We will not make you into the only font of wisdom, we will be calling on broader services.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I wish we could be the font of wisdom on Fort Regent but unfortunately it is somewhat out of our hands at present.

Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Okay. Good. I would like to thank you both. I am sorry we have slightly overrun but I think we have completed the timetable so thank you very, very much indeed. I would like to thank our audience for coming and we will call a halt to the meeting. Thank you very much.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

Thank you.