



## **Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel**

### **Population and Migration**

## **Witness: The Minister for Education**

Tuesday, 9th July 2019

**Panel:**

Deputy S.M. Ahier of St. Helier (Vice-Chairman)

Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin

**Witnesses:**

Senator T.A. Vallois, The Minister for Education

Mr. P. Horsfall, Officer Responsible for Demographic Planning and Sites

Ms. S. Famili, Director of Young People, Further Education Development, Skills and Learning  
(Children, Young People, Education and Skills)

[10:00]

**Deputy S.M. Ahier of St. Helier (Vice-Chairman):**

Good morning, everybody, and thank you for coming today. As you will have noticed, there are only 2 of us this morning but we were quorate and we made the decision to proceed inquorate, as it were. I hope you are happy with that. Have you had a moment to look at the scrutiny rules? I am sure you are well aware of them. That is fine. Thank you. We will have some introductions. My name is Deputy Steve Ahier, Vice-Chair, Corporate Services.

**Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin:**

I am Constable Karen Shenton-Stone, a member of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

**Assistant Scrutiny Officer:**

Theo Stone, Assistant Scrutiny Officer.

**Scrutiny Officer:**

Gary Eisner, Scrutiny Officer.

**The Minister for Education:**

Senator Tracey Vallois, Minister for Education.

**Officer Responsible for Demographic Planning and Sites:**

I am Peter Horsfall. I have responsibility for demographic planning and sites.

**Director of Young People, Further Education Development, Skills and Learning (Children, Young People, Education and Skills):**

Saboohi Famili, Director of Further Education Development for Skills.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Thank you very much. Minister, have you made any contribution so far to the work of the Migration Policy Development Board?

**The Minister for Education:**

I have not personally. I have not been invited, but I know one of my officers, who I have brought along today, has been in front of the development board.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

What consultation have you had yourself with the board? Any at all?

**The Minister for Education:**

None.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Do you feel that you should have been called before the board?

**The Minister for Education:**

I would imagine education is a pretty important topic when it comes to population, so I would hope there would be a conversation somewhere down the line.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

What aspects of the education policy will you be focusing on during this consultation or what do you expect to?

**The Minister for Education:**

Well, we are already firing away with regards to areas that we believe would assist with regards to population in Jersey, which is the skills agenda. So we have done a consultation on post-16 and it is also looking at lifelong learning and reskilling and all those areas. We have finished the consultation. We are due to have a conference tomorrow on the post-16 side of things, the end result of the consultation, and then we will be moving on to looking at policy development following that. I do not know whether Saboohi wants to add anything.

**Director of Young People, Further Education Development, Skills and Learning (Children, Young People, Education and Skills):**

Yes, sure. If I may add, I took a script of the post-16 strategy to the migration policy board. I explained what we would expect the impact of the skills on the migration policy to be. Obviously the Minister and Assistant Minister are fully involved and are fully briefed on that. So there has been some interactions with the migration policy board that has been reported back to the Minister. On your question of the Minister directly being involved with the policy board, that has not happened. What we are looking at is ensuring that we have the right skillset for the population in Jersey to be able to access the jobs that currently exist as well as being able to develop people to have the right skills for the jobs that we do not know yet what they are for the future. We intrinsically link with the economic development framework and the work that is being done in terms of defining what business and the economy is going to look for the future in Jersey. Again, that would have an impact on migration. The post-16 strategy that has been out has some cross-departmental implications in terms of policy development. That I will be working on with my counterparts from S.P.P.P. (Strategic Policy, Performance and Population) within the government structure as well as the scrutiny boards and the development board that was set up in terms of political aspects.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Your direct consultation with the policy development board, do you think that they listened to your concerns? Were you happy with their response?

**Director of Young People, Further Education Development, Skills and Learning (Children, Young People, Education and Skills):**

I had very positive feedback from them. I think they heard what they needed to be said. I do not think ... there are elements that we need to work on and find out the solution to. It is not an easy answer to some of our serious problems that we have, which would need still some migration, in the short term at least, for us to be able to provide the workforce that we currently need. But there is a

longer-term plan for us to be able to develop the provision that is available on Island for our people to be able to access the jobs that we currently allow a licence for recruitment. So, overall I believe that what I said was positively received and I had positive feedback afterwards. There is further work to be done in terms of us working together in bringing about the changes that are needed to the migration policy and looking at the impact of what that has on other aspects of the Government and governing of Jersey.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Minister, how do you expect the policies put forward by the migration board to affect the work of the Education Department during the coming years?

**The Minister for Education:**

I would imagine that there will be or I would hope there will be a bigger focus on the need for us to recognise the need to skill up not only children that are coming through our education system and the 16-to-25 bracket but looking at the reskilling of our current population as things like artificial intelligence come in and enabling them to be able to work across industries. I think it has been known that the world of work will look very different in the next 20 years, so it is trying to pre-empt that and encourage a change set in skills and recognising that in some areas there will not necessarily be just one job. There will be a multiplier of jobs that may be accessible in terms of fewer hours, flexible working, different skillsets, and we need to try to ensure that we put in place the right toolkits for our population who currently reside here and are born here so that they can go into the world of work and support the economy going forward.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

You are mentioning obviously, looking forward, A.I. (artificial intelligence) and such like. Are you also looking in education as to what sort of effect that will have on education and the numbers of teachers required?

**The Minister for Education:**

Yes and no. The reason why I say yes is because one of the pieces of work that we are looking at doing this time is school funding. We are going out to look at a school funding review, so that will be to identify the types of resources and the requirements that are needed in schools. What we are recognising in education at the moment is similar to what the police have gone through the last few years where it is not necessarily policing skills. It is more a social mental health support that is needed for our population and we are seeing that very much through our education system at the moment. We are identifying areas in terms of resources where we can put in the required support that provides forms of resilience and assistance to our younger people and families so that they can build through their own ability to deal with some of the needs and issues that they face going through

life and be able to build the resilience in them that they will be able to apply once leaving education. There is a multiplier of issues that are currently identified in the education system. It is not necessarily just about teachers. There are support workers; there are primary care support workers; there are psychologists; there is all the things that go into provide that wraparound support.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

More specifically, with advances in I.T. (information technology) and such like, there will be the possibility of lectures being given over wide areas whereby they will be beamed into schools and covering thousands and thousands of pupils. Do you envisage that being the case in Jersey?

**The Minister for Education:**

I cannot see that being the sole way of providing education in Jersey. I do not think that will be the sole way of providing education in most places. There is a great benefit to having a person in a classroom face to face with the children. It comes back to the social emotional interaction and having that ability to learn with other people. There may be elements where we could identify those types of lectures in a further education or secondary setting but that has not been considered at the moment. We are trying to bring the system up to a position where it has the foundation to be flexible enough to deal with some of these particular issues that may come forward or potential opportunities that we could utilise in the future.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Do you think it is not being moved forward because that is a funding issue?

**The Minister for Education:**

Likely. We have got some very old school buildings, for example, so it is dealing with some of the technology in some of these schools. I will give you an example of Les Landes Primary School at St. Ouen. It is a great school, they do the best they can, but in terms of the Wi-Fi capability and using the internet up there, it is not as succinct and able as maybe Springfield or Janvrin or Rouge Bouillon in town. There are some of those areas to overcome. Like I said, that is back to the basics, so it enables the type of technology that could be used in schools going forward. We have got St. Martin School, which is a newer primary school, which has more of a technology base within the classrooms that they can utilise as and when teachers feel it is most effective to support the children's learning in the curriculum. So, some of it can be capital issues, where the building may be at a point where it is more difficult to get some of these items in. Les Quennevais with the new build, they have been very forward thinking with regard to their science labs and those types of areas. There is opportunity every time we look at a capital project with regards to a school or looking at areas within the curriculum to identify those opportunities to change those areas.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Moving on to teacher recruitment, we have heard in the past from trade unions about the difficulties in recruiting teachers to move to the Island, and I am sure you are more than aware of the problem.

**The Minister for Education:**

Yes.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

What are the problems schools face in recruiting new staff?

**The Minister for Education:**

The things that I get fed back are areas like the cost of living in Jersey, the high cost of living especially for families who come here. There is the issue of classroom-based incidences. If you look at the teacher survey that we have, it identifies some of the concerns that teachers have around not only the children's emotional wellbeing but their own wellbeing as teachers. The demands of the curriculum in the schools can be particularly overwhelming coupled with the emotional mental health side of things. There are a number of areas that we are trying to focus not just short wins but looking at long term how we can put in place the appropriate support mechanisms but also recognising that we have just had ... well, S.E.B. (States Employment Board) has just had the discussions around the pay and there will be a board set up where they will be discussing areas of what they call efficiencies and how they can improve some of the areas that maybe have legacy issues that may not have necessarily been addressed in the past.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

How much do the existing migration rules and policies play a part in recruitment challenges, or would you say it was more to do with, as you said, cost of living and behaviour in the classroom?

**The Minister for Education:**

I think what we are seeing in education is similar to what I would say you would see in the health service, so areas becoming more specialised. For example, S.T.E.M. subjects, your science, technology, engineering and maths, are particularly specialised so I would imagine it is ... well, we have had concerns around, for example, maths teachers particularly in the secondary schools. Not so much in the primary schools, more in secondary schools because it is more specialised in certain subjects. The more specialised a subject becomes, the harder it is to recruit to.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Would you say that the current migration policies play a part in that or is that just because maths teachers are fewer?

**The Minister for Education:**

I tend to see that it is more of a supply and demand issue. I would not say the policy necessarily has that much of an impact. I think it is recognised that if you want to be learning the best types of maths and the best types of science and giving those children the best opportunities that they could possibly have in their schooling life, then we need to have the quality and the right person in front of the classroom. I think that is recognised as quite pivotal in terms of ensuring in the future that those children are able to reach their full potential and get to where they want to be.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

How do you believe a future policy should ensure that we recruit adequate numbers of teachers? Is there something that you would add for policy?

**The Minister for Education:**

I think we need to be really bold and brave as an Island and look at how we can be more flexible in our working patterns and maybe also considering what we have in terms of an education offering, so not necessarily just blindly following what the U.K. (United Kingdom) does in terms of the curriculum. There are opportunities, I believe, especially with our education law, which is another piece of work that I am working on, to have that consultation and have that wider society's input on how we can provide a really good education system, possibly the best education system. There is no reason why we should not be able to do that. We are a small Island, but sometimes it is not just following what other places do. There can be some areas that we can provide some really unique opportunities, especially in the post-16 area I believe, but it is trying to break down that barrier and understanding that we are not part of the U.K., we are not an English model. A large proportion of people, of course, come here from the U.K. and ultimately think that we just do what they do.

[10:15]

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Would you like to add to that?

**Director of Young People, Further Education Development, Skills and Learning (Children, Young People, Education and Skills):**

Yes, if I may. I think, as the Minister said, there is a great opportunity for post-16 because the outcome of post-16 is the skillsets that those individuals who graduate from post-16 education have and what capabilities they have to either enter the world of work or continue with their education in higher education. Making sure that we use the benefits of technology to be able to give them the flexibility of the provision in the way of bringing the best lecturers that we can through technology,

beaming them as you called it, being able to create provision that would be creative and would be enabling individuals to use the skillset that they have on how to learn rather than learning a specific subject, which would prepare them for the world of work of the future where there are uncertainties, so they have the ability to choose and to critically analyse what is in front of them rather than following a set curriculum and getting a qualification at the end of it. So, it is moving towards change of the way that people teach. Moving away from being the sage on the stage with all the knowledge, as a lecturer at the front of the class, to becoming a guide on the side where you work with your students and enabling them to access the information that they have from a variety of sources, including the internet, including online, including various ways that they can access the information would give them the ability to become individuals who would be able to choose options moving forward. Training our lecturers and our teachers for post-secondary to move away from being the teacher and the lecturer to become facilitators of learning using all the options that are available to them that would be classed as learning resources is the key priority. Past post-16 immediately, which is classed as the age of people going to university, for the Island we have a great opportunity to look at how can we bring about a high level of skills and education for a high level of skills to the Island without the need to have a university body as a building but to have the provision available, so for us to work with Economic Development, with the employers and with the community to say what skills is it that we need. We know with the influence of A.I. we will have low-level administrative jobs, that can be called robotic, that will be delivered by robots and, therefore, A.I. would take those jobs away. That is not just in the finance industry. You can now see that happening in agriculture, you can see that happening in retail. How many times do you go to a shopping centre and buy things that you would self-checkout? So there is elements of A.I. that are impacting on a lot of industry and we need to work with those industries to make sure that we have the workforce that is educated at the right level for the jobs that they have. There is a great of opportunity here for us to recruit the right people, to train them on the right aspects and make sure that they would be prepared for the impact of A.I. as we move forward.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

How many teachers do you believe are required? How many vacancies do you have? Do you think you will have any trouble recruiting the teachers because of housing problems, housing qualification problems?

**The Minister for Education:**

I do not have the vacancy rate in front of me but I can get that to you. I think our biggest issue in Jersey is housing. That is part of the reason why we have got such a high cost of living over here. There is no one silver bullet that is going to fix this. This has been an issue since the 1950s, the 1960s. This has been mentioned time and time again. If you are looking through the Jersey archives, it is identified as housing being an issue time and time again. There are various different



ways of applying offerings from Government to support certain housing schemes in the past. In terms of the recruitment to the vacancy side of things, I think that there is a level of belief that maybe teaching is not as valued as what it should be. If you look at other jurisdictions such as Finland as an example, they really value their teachers, value them so much that there is literally a waiting list to teach in Finland because of the requirement for the master's and the higher qualifications and the quality that they put in terms of their education provision. It is societal, it is a cultural thing. It is how people are seen or valued. I go back to this kind of western model that we have, which is very much in Jersey we have got this huge disparity between low income and high income in terms of the finance industry. I think a lot of the time because of that disparity it increases the cost of living because there is more money able to be spent on things like housing and rent and those areas, a consumer-led market that has not had much regulation in Jersey in the past. Therefore, it applies greater stress and pressure on those people who are earning less than those high in the finance industry. It would be easier for a teacher, doing the things that they have to do and see first-hand in a classroom on a day-to-day basis, not just in a classroom but work they are having to take home and over the weekends and during the holidays to keep up with the pace and the change that is happening in the world, not just in education, to turn round and say: "Do you know what, I do not need this hassle. I am going to go and work in the finance industry in Jersey because it is less hassle and I will probably get paid more and that means my cost of living ... it is easier to keep up with the cost of living and I have less pressure and less stress in my life compared to what I am dealing with at the moment." We need to try to reconfigure that.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

In the health sector housing has been made available for nurses in certain instances. Do you believe that is a policy that should be applied to teachers?

**The Minister for Education:**

I believe there is a key worker paper that is being developed by the Minister for Housing at the moment and I have had a conversation with these officers around the key worker accommodation piece. We recognise that there is a need, particularly for specialist teachers. I go back to that specialist area. We have a programme over here that offers a graduate teaching programme to encourage people who are graduates already over here, who may be working in another industry, to come in and do teaching here, so you are Jersey-qualified teacher. That has been going for a couple of years now, which has been pretty successful, but I go back to this issue of the specialisms and I think that is potentially where at first point of contact we would probably need some form of support in terms of the key worker accommodation.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

How is development of a post-16 education strategy intermingling with the work to develop a new migration policy?

**The Minister for Education:**

I will quickly briefly say something and then I will let Saboohi take over. I sit on what is ... I think they are changing the name of it but it is the Economic Framework Group, which was set up with the Minister for Treasury, the Minister for Economic Development, the Minister for External Relations. There is myself on there and there is a couple of other people. We meet fairly regularly and we discuss a variety of different economic issues and how we are going to put together a long-term plan and what we need in order to provide the right tools to pull and push as and when we need to within the economy. One of the big discussions we had recently is the need to invest in skills and recognising the need to educate our local population to areas ... skill them to the areas that they need to be skilled to support them in various different jobs. So that is kind of the area that ... I sit on the R.P.I. (retail price index), the inflation strategy group as well. We are talking around those areas, but if I hand over to Saboohi to give you a bit more information.

**Director of Young People, Further Education Development, Skills and Learning (Children, Young People, Education and Skills):**

I guess if I may say skills would have a big impact on migration policy. If we look at the number of licences we issue at this moment in time for people who come to live here, it is mainly based on skills and quality of expertise that we do not have within the Island. Therefore, there is no doubt that there are skillsets that we cannot have on the Island. Even if we had all the money in the world to spend on skills we would not be able to produce some of the specialist skills that we need. So our specialist brain surgeons and whatever, it is best for them to come over and have that skillset imported, if you like. However, it is true to say for the next 20 years people who are currently at work are people that you are going to have employed within the workforce and the jobs that are going to change, the systems and processes that are going to change that we see all the time, we need to be able to upskill them, reskill them, unlearn them from what they have been practising before and get them to learn new skills to be able to cope with the job changes that there are. There is that element of it that would have an impact that if you were unable to upskill people who are currently at work, we would have people dropping out either through redundancies and through changes to the functions of the jobs that they currently have and, therefore, not being able to regain an employment within the job market. So, providing opportunities for people to upskill, reskill, learn new skills is absolutely crucial to reduce the migration in some respects. Also if you look at some of our more traditional industries, like retail, construction, agriculture, hospitality maybe, you will see that local ... there is a perception of the local indigenous Jersey in entering those industries that it is not as lucrative or it is not a career pathway for them. Therefore, there is a job of work to be done there in terms of providing adequate and appropriate career advice for people to know that getting

into retail does not necessarily mean being a clerk behind a till all your life. You have opportunities to become a lawyer and be in retail. You have an opportunity to be an accountant and be in retail. You can be a buyer for a company and travel around the world. Similar sort of arguments can go with, let us say, hospitality. It is not all about washing the dishes. Yes, you start there but you can be, in a few years' time, running the restaurant and earning the equivalent of someone who would be in finance and probably have a much more creative and interesting life as well. Career advice and, therefore, skills, encouraging our young people and the indigenous Jersey population to be attracted to the traditional industries would also help reduce the migration. It is no secret that we have this sort of temporary migration that happens over the summer period, for hospitality, let us say, or for agriculture when we have a season where we need to have people to come and help with the planting of the potatoes and so on. So, giving better advice and giving better information about what career opportunities there are would have an impact on migration. So, in a sense we also need to work with the migration team and the policy board to make sure that we are working towards bringing the talent that we need to be able to impart the knowledge in the form of our lecturers, in the form of our educational managers and in the form of people who come and innovate in the way that we teach and we learn, so we have that new blood and we have the new ways of thinking brought in. Exemplars of that could be successfully piloted so other institutions can pick up how they can teach and how they can learn. In all aspects of the education world, if you like, from the entry point to the world of work where people will graduate from post-16 or higher education to those who are at work and continue to be at work to those who will exit the world of work, skills have a role to play to ensure that people are placed at the right position for themselves, that make them to be happy, fulfilled individuals contributing positively to the society. Skills have that key leverage in that sense that would impact on migration, because if you have the right people in the right posts doing the right thing you would not need to have expensive imports or imports of any value to come to the Island.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Absolutely. Thank you. In your submission we note that: "The statutory provision of education to all school age children is relevant as is access to higher education funding and opportunities for lifelong learning on Island." Could you please elaborate on this?

**The Minister for Education:**

The education law requires that any child that sets foot on the Island of compulsory school age is educated. I have responsibility to ensure they are educated in some form. Whether that is the parent's choice of sending them to a private school, a fee-paying school, home schooling or within one of our non-fee-paying schools, I have the responsibility to ensure that those children are in some form of education. With regards to higher education, it is not quite the same. You have to have been here 5 years before you can access higher education funding. It is a slightly different model.

[10:30]

The Education Department is the only department that requires, from first footsteps on the rock, a legal responsibility to ensure that that child is educated. For example, with social security there is no access to benefits until you have been here for 5 years, no qualifications until you have been here for 10 years. Higher education is classed as a benefit, like social security, so therefore it is 5 years, whereas with education, as soon as they step on Jersey that is my responsibility as Minister for Education.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

The submission we received from Jersey Finance noted the need for educational establishments to train and upskill staff, as was spoken about before, in the local economy. What work are you already doing to meet this need?

**The Minister for Education:**

I met with Jersey Finance recently and I have met with a few industry areas. I am sure Saboohi will be able to elaborate. On the school side of things, what we have done or what we are trying to achieve is recognising and understanding the offering within industries and different areas of work. Like Saboohi was saying, you do not necessarily go into hospitality and just end up being a dishwasher. You can become a chef, you can be creative, you can do all those types of things, and it can be an extremely rewarding role to play. It is trying to get that understanding of all these different industries to the younger generation, our children in the schools. We have things like the cultural passport as an example where we are trying to take the curriculum as it currently stands ... if you go on gov.je you can see the curriculum that is provided at Jersey schools. What we do is we are trying to create packs for teachers or schools whereby they take in the different industries of the Island. Agriculture is a perfect one that I will give an example of. Jersey Dairy have an education officer who provided a resource pack for teachers, which we hold centrally and we provide that through the schools. What they are able to do is they go up ... they take the children up to the farm, they can see at the first-hand how farming works, and then they will go straight to Jersey Dairy to see the production line of how the milk is produced. The reason why that is important is because it is recognised that it is not just being a farmer. There are a variety of sciences that go behind this in engineering. Specifically on the production line, the engineering and the technology required to do those types of things enables children to see that it is not just necessarily being a farmer on the field. There are multitudes of areas they can skill up to be within that industry. That is an example of how we are trying to bring what we have in Jersey into the education curriculum. It is bit by bit because we only have so much capacity as a department to do these types of things. It is a similar conversation that industry is having with post-16 and what we are trying to do is tie up that

conversation that industry is having with post-16 with our senior advisers in the Education Department of how we can support our teachers in the classroom to assist in terms of their workload especially by providing those packs, because some teachers who are here do not understand. Like I said before, it is not the U.K. system, it is Jersey, so being able to identify learning within the curriculum to a Jersey setting. Instead of maybe learning about a castle in Wales in history, you might learn about the castle at Gorey and it is more identifiable for a child. Therefore, the outcomes in terms of learning are higher because it is there, they can see it, they can go to it, they can experience it with the likes of Jersey Heritage and all those areas. So there needs to be a little bit more kind of tying some of these areas together and that is what we are starting to do, but Saboohi can expand particularly on the skills.

**Director of Young People, Further Education Development, Skills and Learning (Children, Young People, Education and Skills):**

On the question about finance and what we are doing about it, one of the key feedback points that we have received from them is the lack of diversification and diversity within the finance sector and an issue that they would like to address in terms of who would go to the finance industry as a whole. Within my remit I also have the pleasure of working with colleagues from Skills Jersey that have the Trident programme. That is a work experience programme and they also have the careers advisers that work within schools and will take roadshows and events into schools to provide feedback and advice on career choices for students. So I am working with members of the finance industry to make sure that they create a roadshow that would give the knowledge and information about the industry to those who probably would not think that industry to be a future destination for them to aspire to join that industry and also to make sure that they would bring back, as the Minister described, what does it involve working within the finance industry. Many of our young people who go directly from post-16 graduation into the finance industry would have a ceiling of progression that they can get unless the institution that they have joined would put them on a training programme that would develop them to progress within their progression path, if you like, within their career. So it is working with those industries to say: "If you set out from the beginning to say, yes, you can come in and be there doing a very robotic checklist sort of exercise but then you would be able to take these opportunities to upgrade your skills or learn new skills and then these are the pathways that you can go." Enabling the young people to choose those industries as an option is the work that we are going to do with them immediately from this academic year from 2019. In terms of developing the skills that they need, we are very aware that some of our finance institutions would specifically recruit a certain type of graduate, people who have graduated from Russell Group universities and so on. Although in Jersey we have a high level of our students who would go to university, they do not necessarily come back and therefore that would create a gap that might have had the skillset from a Russell Group university that is desired for our industries and employers here. Our young people do not necessarily want to come back immediately after they have graduated, and personally

and professionally I think that is the right thing for them not to come back immediately. I think we need to work - and this is part of our proposal for the post-16 strategy - to create incentives for our young people who graduate outside to come back and to be able to work within the industries that we have without becoming a community like Singapore that would only fund education if it is matching the industry. We do not want to be doing that, but we can work towards something that would be fit and appropriate for Jersey, which would provide the opportunities for our young people to gain the skills that they need, to meet the requirements for the industry but does not bind them to be only going to a certain profession. There is a myriad of initiatives going on in that area. We have had a real good level of exchange and interactions with the finance industry throughout our post-16 consultation and we hope to be able to continue working with them to address the shortage that they feel at this moment in time and, more importantly, address the diversity issues that they have.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Minister, you mentioned before about agriculture. What qualifications can you obtain in agriculture in Jersey? Are there any courses at Highlands that people can do?

**The Minister for Education:**

My understanding is there are not. I believe there is a horticultural qualification that you can take at the prison but I do not believe there is one at Highlands.

**Director of Young People, Further Education Development, Skills and Learning (Children, Young People, Education and Skills):**

I do not know. I can check and come back to you. I do not know if we run any specific agricultural programme at Highlands.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

What about in the health service? Do we have any education ... obviously for nurses and such like. Are we bringing through enough nurses?

**The Minister for Education:**

The nursing degree is done through the Health Department. My Assistant Minister, Deputy Maçon, covers social security, health and education for the very reason that he is keeping a foot in all the skills area. Health provides the nursing degree side of things. We have quite a few offerings at Highlands, not just nursing but in terms of healthcare. We offer qualifications for childcare and I think there is counselling. There is a myriad of courses that we have got online. If you look at [highlands.ac.uk](http://highlands.ac.uk), they have got all the courses on there but that is just a few that I can think of off the top of my head.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Thank you. Moving on to school provision, our predecessor panel's 2018 report on migration policy found that inward migration of 700 people per year would lead to a need for the equivalent of 6 new primary schools by 2035. If inward migration is 1,000 per year, the same report estimates that there would be the need for the equivalent of 10 new primary schools by 2035. How are you planning to meet this demand?

**The Minister for Education:**

There is a number of variables within that figure and the demand. It will depend on the people that are coming into the Island and whether they have children with them or not. It will also depend on the number of families that are leaving the Island with their children. Also it is not necessarily about building new primary schools. I had a suspicion that this question may come along and that is why I brought Peter with me because he is our in-house expert on demographics for sites. He has done some work on ... they are doing very good work at Education in terms of determining the potential increase and it is usually driven by birth rate in the Island, but there is roughly between I think it is 210 to 250 children who are coming into the Island annually.

**Officer Responsible for Demographic Planning and Sites:**

Annually, yes, at about the same number.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Okay. So it is static at the moment really.

**Officer Responsible for Demographic Planning and Sites:**

It is pretty static, yes. One of the reasons why someone like me has to do the job I do is because we have to deal with the reality of the numbers. Obviously it is one thing having to be pragmatic and the Minister has a duty to make sure legally children are in school and we have to be all over it. We have to be 100 per cent confident in the numbers. The good news is that there are lead times involved but because the birth rate is a big factor we have 3½ years before children start school, so if we suddenly see a spike in birth numbers we have time to do something about it. But net migration surprisingly has been pretty much static. There are slightly more people coming than going with children but nowhere near the same degree of children as adults and we have seen that shift, which is interesting.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Thank you.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Sorry, do you mind if I just pick up on the birth rate? The birth rate in 2012 was 1,123 and in 2018 was 933, a decrease of 190. Are you factoring that into your calculations?

**Officer Responsible for Demographic Planning and Sites:**

The other thing that is interesting to look at is that the birth rates that are published are birth rates for January to January. Of course, for schools it is September to August, so that figure you gave in 2012 is slightly higher. For the school year it was 1,164, so what we did to cater for those children is we built additional forms. We had a lead time to do that so we have that capacity in the system. Those children are currently in year 2. For 2012 and 2010-11 we saw above average numbers. Those children are moving through the system and we are now seeing the opposite. We are seeing, as you say last year ... and because I was attending this hearing I spoke to child health, who I deal with regularly, to get updated figures and the figures for this year are very similar to last year, which is surprising. We are seeing a reduction in numbers but again it is ... there was a certain amount of yo-yoing in the first place because we are fairly small population and numbers can vary for no good reason and it is a difficult one to predict. As I say, because we have time to do something about it we can manage it. The other thing that is worth mentioning is that we have created that capacity in the system specifically within year 2. By the time those children move into secondary school, that capacity will be available again. That capacity will be available again within 4 years' time. The worst case scenario if we saw a huge increase in birth rates in the next couple of years, we could do something about that because we have that capacity built into the system. Now, that is physical capacity. To support that we need operational capacity, which is basically recruiting teachers. So we have the space but it is important the approach we took was not to build new schools so we could have some elasticity. Obviously if you build a new school and it is half empty it is going to cost you an awful lot of money. If you invest in schools so they can expand and shrink then as the population expands and shrinks, it is a far more efficient way of doing things, plus you are investing in your infrastructure as opposed to having a separate, half-empty school. That is exactly the right decision that was taken to cater for that problem.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Considering those figures, do you believe that 6 primary schools will be required by 2035?

**Officer Responsible for Demographic Planning and Sites:**

If I could explain a little bit more about how we allocate places and the approach that we take. That figure I would imagine was given to you using a generic statement of looking at the number of children and then modelling, saying: "We have got 182 kids, just how many you could fit into a primary school" and saying: "You have got units of 182."

[10:45]



The actual approach we would take would be far ... would be dependent on the numbers but it would be the approach that best fitted ... would have to be the efficient place to be, but my understanding is that we would review that at the time but if we used the same approach that we used with larger numbers then we would not be ... we would increase the numbers in schools in that way, but it would be dependent on the numbers. I point back to what we did when we last had a spike in birth numbers and how we accommodated that and now we have that additional capacity in the system. Because we have seen a reduction in the numbers going forward, that means that we have got that capacity.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Thank you.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

That answered a couple of our questions.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Sorry.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

No, not you. That was very good and it was very encouraging as well. So, if you have a spike in numbers for a couple of years you would have to recruit extra staff to help with that, so when the birth rate is ... then you have a class size that is smaller. How do you cope with that?

**Officer Responsible for Demographic Planning and Sites:**

As an example, we open between 29 and 33 forms a year. We look at the number of classes that we have got across all primary schools in Jersey. The rule of thumb is you have 1,000 as a current rule but that has dropped at the moment, but we have got between 930 and 1,164. A percentage of that goes to private schools, so we have roughly 75 per cent of those children starting state schools and the comings and goings are mainly from state schools because private schools, V.C.P. (Victoria College Prep) for example, are filled up straightaway, so we just deal with comings and goings. We decide the number of forms as part of our reception allocation process, so when children are 3, turning 4 and they are in nursery, we then know how many places are required. We then determine the number of forms and then if we have to recruit any additional teachers because of that we would do that at that time. That would give us ... places are allocated in the February so that would give us ... we have got 7 months to get another reception teacher. It is a big decision because that reception teacher will be recruited, we will be opening another form, that is a 7-year period, so there is 7 years' worth of the cost of the teacher. So it is going to cost that.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Thank you. How does the ageing demographic factor into your planning, both in terms of buildings and staff but also in terms of providing for the right sorts of skills we will need in the future?

**The Minister for Education:**

One of the issues that we have of course is there was a baby boom. That happened and we are going to see the effects of that coming forward with the reduction in birth rates that is a potential issue for the Island. The reason why I say that is no matter how much investment we make in terms of education and skills for the children that are born here and go through our education system, there will be I believe it is a 2:1 ratio when it comes to the ageing population boom when it hits in 2035 I believe. Therefore, there will be less people working to the number of people who are in retirement. So there is the question and this is really vitally important about the post-16 side of things ... not everybody will want to retire. People may want to go into a job where they can happily go in a few hours a week where it is most socially beneficial for them. So I think we have a role to play in that with that post-16 where we can say: "We have an opportunity to offer you a skillset." Skills Jersey do a fantastic job in terms of apprenticeships, mentoring, support in those particular areas, and they have been really good at supporting both the industry and the individual in terms of the apprenticeship schemes that are in place. So there are a number of factors. I believe it will depend ultimately on the number of people that wish to stay in work or wish maybe to do more flexible working, depending on what the world of work will look like unless the birth rate should dramatically increase over the next couple of years in Jersey. Of course that will add to the population issue but it has been fairly static in terms of the numbers of the birth rate over the years. There is only every now and then. It is like the economy, is it not: every now and then you get a dip?

**Officer Responsible for Demographic Planning and Sites:**

It would be reasonable to expect another baby boom just because of the sheer volume of people ahead. It might be surprising. We are not seeing it at the moment because the indicators are that you think we are having more children but in fact we are having less. I guess that is more about society.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Presumably the cost of housing. University funding, obviously university grants: if there is an influx of 250 children with the migration policy currently, do you think that university funding will be sustainable with more people requiring grants?

**The Minister for Education:**

A little bit of a hand up here. I was on the scrutiny panel last term who forced the issue of the higher education funding. Now, we were not particularly happy with the funding model that came forward because we recognised the unsustainability of it, so that is a piece of work that the States Assembly committed whoever was going to be the Minister for Education: and the Minister for Treasury and Resources to look at again. So the current scheme is an interim scheme. What I will say is those students who have gone into a programme last September or are going in this September I would expect them to continue with this scheme because it is not right to pull it from under their feet. But we have a responsibility to ensure that we put in a more sustainable model, so we are looking at all the different options. There were 14 options that were put in front of Treasury last time, so some of the work has been done but it is recognising it in conjunction with the post-16 work that we are doing. One of the pieces of work that Deputy Maçon and myself are stuck to, and we believe in very much, is about the recognition of academics being equal to vocational; one is not above the other. We are absolutely committed to ensuring that that is recognised, but we need to ensure that not only is that a sustainable funding model but we have sustainable funding for post-16 to recognise the vocational side of education as well.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Do you believe that your concerns for education are being heard by the Council of Ministers?

**The Minister for Education:**

Sometimes. I am too honest for own good, am I not? I sometimes get the feeling like other things are more important. I recognise that we have Brexit and those types of things. What worries me is when you get a group of people that are so focused on the economy that they do not recognise the thing that builds the economy is education. We are all really busy in our areas and trying to work at cross purposes and there is a lot of changing in the public sector at the moment. I kind of put it down to that to a certain extent because I think we are all trying to ... well, not only are we being held accountable by our peers in the Assembly as well in ensuring that we are driving through our particular initiatives that we are working on, there is a lot of firefighting going on with issues that we have had within the system, which is normal. We are not perfect. I think there does need to be a little bit more emphasis and belief in the investment that education can make to our long-term prosperity in the Island and it is not just about any one type of individual or any one type of class. It is a benefit to everybody and that is why I believe in it so much. That is why I wanted to become Minister for Education. I feel personally as the Minister I have a great deal of support in the Assembly and that is where I pretty much pin my hopes, but it is the fight on funding. The Government Plan we are going through at the moment, which is the interesting situation of everyone trying to vie for different things, we need to ensure the conversation is had in the respect of what we can achieve in the medium and long term rather than just short-term wins. I worry sometimes whether we end up falling into that net because it is the easiest thing to do. I think we have all got our own areas that

we are trying to fight for and that is absolutely right. I have got a legal obligation to provide education and I am going to fight for it.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

The Migration Policy Development Board, do you believe it is diverse enough? Do you think there should have been a representation by maybe a university student, for example, because it is their future after all?

**The Minister for Education:**

I think that it is not necessarily the makeup of the board. I would suggest it is what they do with the information and how they deal with the information. I would expect them - I think they have all signed up for the children's pledge - to put the children first, so I would expect somewhere in this population policy to have the voice of the child. How they would do that, I am happy for them to have a conversation, put on a conference or we create a group of children, whether that is through the Youth Service, whether that is through Education, that they can have a discussion with or question to ask them what they think and how that involves the development of the policy. We are happy to support them if that is the way they want to go down, but I would expect with the Government signing up to what we have signed up to and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that somewhere in there would be the voice of the child and young people. I have been at an event this morning, Youthful Minds and Mind Jersey, promoting healthy young minds, and it is a conference for 2 days with professionals, young people and parents. It is phenomenal, the people that are coming together to try and listen to the voice of the young person. I would expect that somewhere in there would be the voice of the child.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

Thank you very much, Minister. Is there anything else you would like to add before we close the meeting?

**The Minister for Education:**

I do not think so. Is there anything else you want to add on demographics or anything? No.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

No, fine. Thanks very much indeed. Thanks very much for coming.

**The Connétable of St. Martin:**

Thank you very much.

[10:56]