



Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel

Public Hearing

Witness: The Minister for Social Security

Thursday, 22nd October 2020

Panel:

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier (Chair)

Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour

Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier

Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John

Witnesses:

Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier - Minister for Social Security

Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Helier - Assistant Minister for Social Security

Mr. I. Burns – Director General, Customer and Local Services

Ms. S. Duhamel - Head of Policy, Social Security

[14:06]

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier (Chair):

Good afternoon everybody, I will ask the panel to introduce themselves and then I will ask both the Ministers and the officers that are going to contribute. I have received apologies from Deputy Scott Wickenden.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin of St. Saviour:

Thank you, Chair. Deputy Kevin Pamplin of St. Saviour District No. 1, and I am the Vice Chair of this panel.

Deputy G.P. Southern of St. Helier:

Geoff Southern, St. Helier No. 2 District and I am a member of the panel.

Deputy C.S. Alves of St. Helier:

Deputy Carina Alves, Deputy of St. Helier District 2, and I am also a member of the panel.

Deputy T. Pointon of St. John:

Deputy of St. John, Trevor Pointon. I am a member of the panel.

The Minister for Social Security:

Deputy Martin, Minister for Social Security and for St. Helier No. 1.

The Assistant Minister for Social Security:

Hello, good afternoon, Deputy Jeremy Maçon, Assistant Minister for Social Security, District Petite Longueville St. Saviour No. 1, thank you.

Director General, Customer and Local Services.

Good afternoon, Ian Burns, Director General of Customer and Local Services.

Head of Policy, Social Security:

Sue Duhamel, Head of Policy, Social Security.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

That sounds like we have everybody. If we have missed anybody during that introduction then obviously if they can introduce themselves when they are about to speak, that will be helpful because obviously we are recording this so that the public can hear us. The normal rules apply in relation to Scrutiny public hearings as they do normally, even though we are, as I said, doing it remotely. To start off this afternoon, Minister, it would be helpful for our understanding if you could run through what process has been undertaken in the development of the Government Plan 2021 to 2024. For example, allocation of projects, consultation and progress status of each project identified in the last Government Plan.

The Minister for Social Security:

Obviously we had to do it in a shorter time and we had to change some bits because of COVID. The priorities are still as I sent to you in January 2020. We have had to change a few. Some have moved out a bit. Let me go through one and find one. The supporting care at home, that is a project that we had to move back because it is literally going into people's homes. We have still got the money. We got the money to start it but we have still got the money so we are hoping as soon as we can go into people's homes we will. The Incapacity Benefit review is coming along quite well.

The supporting financial independence in old age, that has definitely been moved back. It may be a part of it when we discuss the review of the Social Security Fund, see where it fits in there in a bigger term. There was quite a bit of work, ground work, and options done so I will not lose all that work. Obviously the minimum wage, that is to undertake a review on the minimum wage but I have also added to look at the way the minimum wage is arrived at and the law it comes under after the debate on P.100. I think it was Deputy Southern's debate. I think it came as a shock to a lot of States Members how the law was the law, as the Solicitor General said, and it was very tight. So we have to look at that, is it still the right way to do it after 15 years - it has been in since 2005. That is an update on ...

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Sorry, Minister, to interrupt. Can we just stick with the process that happened in relation to them because we obviously have got quite a lot of questions and we only have a very limited time. So it really about the process that was undertaken that we are interested in because obviously we will be asking questions along the way in relation to a number of projects. Thank you.

The Minister for Social Security:

Sorry, can you be clear, what do you mean about the process? What about the minimum wage or the process of ...

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

No, in relation to the question that I asked, I asked to have an understanding of what process was gone through or undertaken in order to develop the plan 2021 to 2024. So effectively it is for us to understand how your priorities were looked at, how you decided which things were going to be deferred or continued, et cetera, for us to have a better understanding. We will ask questions as we go along in relation to specifics.

The Assistant Minister for Social Security:

So, what was the C.O.M. (Council of Ministers) process.

The Minister for Social Security:

The C.O.M. process is ... obviously the last year's plan covered the next 4 years and there is not much in the last plan that we have not got in this plan. Obviously, there were lots of talks around the table, things that might have to be put back, may not have been funded but in my portfolio not a lot except for the rebalancing and savings. Other than that ... and then the plan was coming together. There were a lot of meetings and there was, you know, a bit of argy-bargy, I suppose, in deciding what was in and what was out. But on my part there is not anything that I did not want to do that I am not still doing and that I did not bid for the money. If I am not answering the right

question when you get specifics, Mary, maybe the penny will drop. Sorry, I may be being a bit dense today.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay, thank you, Minister. We will move on. I will move over now to Deputy Pamplin in relation to resources mapping to ministerial portfolios.

[14:15]

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

I am tempted to ask you your definition of, I think you said, argy-bargy, but I will leave that fly. We have been obviously going through this the best we can, this is a fast process for us as well as you and we are doing our best. Hopefully we will get to specifics as we go along. I really want to start with the resources mapped to your profile within the Government Plan 2021 to 2024. I have those figures in front of me, I am sure you guys all do as well. The allocations have decreased since the previous plan, that previous plan, so could you just talk us through the reasons for some of those substantial increases or decreases?

The Minister for Social Security:

What page are we talking about, Deputy?

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

For example, the resources 2023 in the 2021 to 2024 plan were 132,492 in the ...

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Previous year.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Previous year, yes, sorry. Thanks, Deputy Southern. So we are just looking for why ... can you zero in on the differences?

The Minister for Social Security:

Are you in the annex or in the Government Plan? I do not want to give you any wrong figures. I have loads of figures here and loads of pages. What page are you on? What figures are you comparing? Is it in the annex?

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Yes, so it is your resources that were mapped to your profile. The allocations for 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024. The allocation has gone down and we were just wondering why that was.

The Minister for Social Security:

For 2021, I have the figures, yes. Resources mapped to ministerial portfolios, Minister for Social Security 2021 128,753 and you said that has gone down?

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Yes, there are decreases so we were just wondering what the reasons were. Is it the impact of COVID? Just some light really on what the differences are and why they are there.

The Minister for Social Security:

They are going up every year, the fourth year is higher. Are you comparing them to last year, are you saying?

Deputy G.P. Southern:

When comparing to the previous year, if you look at 2021 in the previous year it is 188 million, whereas the current figure for 2021 is ...

The Minister for Social Security:

Sorry, it is the States grant that is missing out of all them years, yes. The States grant.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

That is the States grant. That was the ...

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes, not being paid across, yes.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Okay, that is the big impact.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Can I just join in there? Is that because you assume that the House will endorse not doing that grant?

The Minister for Social Security:

When we put the plan together, Deputy, it is a plan. We absolutely have to come to the Assembly to get the Assembly to agree for me not to pay it for just one year. I am not doing it for any other

year. I need to do the Social Security review on both the fund and the Reserve Fund and that is why I am only asking the Assembly ... if you remember we did ask for 2 years and absolutely ...

Deputy G.P. Southern:

They knocked you back to one.

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes, you knocked me back and so we are now not just coming back for year to rebalance and to use the money we need that we have spent in COVID, we need 2021, 2022 and 2023. But we are only coming back in the next plan for the 65 million.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Thanks, Minister. Thanks, Deputy Southern. So the annex - going back to the annex - provides a table for Customer and Local Services net revenue expenditure for the years 2021 to 2024 - I am struggling with the numbers. Can you talk us through how the budget is allocated for that and particularly the difference in the budget again allocated to C.L.S. (Customer and Local Services) and the budget allocated to your portfolio? If you could do that, that would be great.

The Minister for Social Security:

Is it the C.L.S. budget or my budget?

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Well, if you start with how the budget is allocated for Customer and Local Services based on the annex and we will start there.

Director General, Customer and Local Services.

I think you are referring to the annex around page 12. There is a difference between the Minister's allocated resources and that for Customer and Local Services. If you cannot hear me, please do wave or something. As you have just covered, the resources the Minister has include the majority of the Customer and Local Services budget, extra COVID money for income support and a long-term care grant, as well as, in the years it is payable, the States grant. Whereas the Customer and Local Services budget, which is typically around 91 million for next year does not include the long-term care grant, does not include the States grant, it includes just the cost of running the department and, relevant to this panel, obviously the benefits that come under the Minister for Social Security. It also includes the cost of running the library, the Office of the Superintendent Registrar, et cetera. It is much smaller amounts for quite a few other Ministers. How it is based is we look at the budget from last year and look forward in terms of forecasting those benefits based upon the F.P.P. (Fiscal Policy Panel) forecast around inflation. Of course in this current year it has been quite a moving

picture around those forecasts and also around the actual experience in terms of people claiming benefits. We have forecasted ahead and also considered what resources we may need and the like. In relation to Customer and Local Services, that is how that budget is built up. Obviously we also look at the contribution towards the balancing of last year's efficiency savings as well.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Where there are increases in the 2022 estimate, 2023 estimate, your budget goes up slightly but is that purely inflationary or is there ... bless you, whoever that was.

The Minister for Social Security:

Sorry, Deputy Pamplin, were you speaking to me?

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Well, I was following on to your Director General there. My follow up question to him was the estimate budgets for the department go up slightly, as he says the 2020 allocation was 90 and then obviously the estimates go to 2022, 2023 they increase slightly. I was just wondering if that was purely inflationary.

Director General, Customer and Local Services.

Yes, the benefits are ... the F.P.P. forecasts are built in so there is an inflationary factor. Obviously the bulk of that 91 million is Income Support.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Still digging into your estimate budgets, the change ...

Director General, Customer and Local Services.

Sorry, Deputy, I think you are on mute.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

No.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

No, I can hear him.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

No, I am not on mute. Can you hear me?

Director General, Customer and Local Services.

We can hear you now.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Thank you. The impact of your changing of working because of the COVID and the changes you made with appointment only procedures, has that had any changes to your forecasting of the budgets and how you may operate in the future or not?

The Minister for Social Security:

I have both my speakers on, is that correct?

Director General, Customer and Local Services.

Both of them off. Apologies, we are just trying to stop any echoing. No, that has not had an impact in our forecasts at all.

The Minister for Social Security:

No, we are managing to sort of ... ways to do it at once. As I think I explained last time, people who do need to come in or do need an appointment, are spending a bit longer in there. We have still got people on ... you know, we are now ... it was reported to me from ... it was another officer, Ian was on a holiday, that they are literally refining all their teams again because of, you know, as Deputy Pointon said, the COVID is still around. We are making sure we have got people safe in, safe out. But the budget, we are still seeing the same amount of people, if we are not seeing them we are trying to deal with them on the phone and then they come in. So it has not affected our budget. In fact we are now opening up more for Back to Work support. We have a bit more money in that and people are really keen. If you think the last sort of thousand ... I call them the last thousand basically, most of those people have worked all their life and they only lost their job through COVID and they are desperate to get back. The problem being the job that they did is not always there so they need some coaching, they need some encouragement and just maybe a little bit of different skills. So that is not going to save us any money.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Is it your intention eventually to restore the situation that was there before, where people could come in on spec and pick up a ticket and be seen by somebody? Are you going to reinstate that or do you intend to do away with that system?

The Minister for Social Security:

Sorry, Deputy Southern, can you start that again? We cannot have 2 speakers on at once or they echo and I had not put the right speaker back on. I am so sorry, could you just repeat that question again?

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Okay, is it your intention to go back to the old system where people could come along on spec, pick up a ticket and be seen by somebody or are you going to maintain the current appointment only system? What is your intention?

The Minister for Social Security:

It is being well monitored but I think you and me particularly over the years used to ... you know, we were very lucky when we took people down to Social Security, we would get a special room and we would get privacy, this is what people are getting now. I have been calling for it for a while. The pop in, again we are doing a lot more online. When COVID has gone, the door will not be shut, we will have to have the appointments. I would love to keep that area of appointments. If people need that bit extra ... to talk to someone, they speak online. I am told everyone has got their papers, if there is anything they do not think they have got, they will bring in and it is just working really well. As I say, it is something I know I was calling for and I am sure you were at some point. We will just keep monitoring it. When COVID has completely left the world we will have to see how well things have done and maybe just adjust things.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Have you got a headcount which says how many appointments you have done per week in how many interview rooms?

The Minister for Social Security:

I am looking at Ian.

Director General, Customer and Local Services.

I think yesterday, for example, we had about 40 appointments. Not everybody turned up for those appointments but we are watching the levels of appointments and monitoring the service, as the Minister says. We are finding obviously more people are calling us up. We are able to help most people over the phone without the need for them to come in and we are also seeing, obviously, increases in both the provision of the online services but also the amount of usage as well. Back in the survey in 2018, I think 76 per cent of the public said they wanted more services online and that is one of the positives we have been able to do during COVID, which is to put more services online and obviously the public are using them and generally rating those services highly.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Could you let us have copies of what record you have for phones, online and appointments? You have been using that system for quite a few months now, could you let us have those figures?

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes, you want a breakdown of the figures?

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Yes, please. So when we talk about the overall budgets for revenue expenditure by C.L.S. can we have a breakdown of what areas those cover?

Director General, Customer and Local Services.

Yes, it is broken down in the annex to the Government Plan into service areas but if that is not sufficient for the Deputy we can see what we can do beyond that.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Just point our officer to the page reference, whatever, so it is there.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Can we move on? I am conscious of the fact that we might be diverging a little bit. Can we go back to Deputy Pamplin, please?

[14:30]

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

So just going through the future estimates, is there any services or similar issues you envisage being transferred to your department elsewhere in the Government between the years 2021 and 2024, Minister, and do you have enough flexibility in this budget to do so if that was the case?

The Minister for Social Security:

Sorry, again, this is C.L.S.'s budget, not mine. I will let Ian answer that.

Director General, Customer and Local Services.

The OneGov model set out that there would be a benefit to customers in having customer facing activity under a single department. That is some of the examples that have already happened with the library and the Office of Superintendent Registrar. There are additional customer facing parts of government which we are still looking to move to come within Customer and Local Services. Those are all pretty much not the responsibility of the Minister for Social Security, so they are all different Ministers. We have a rolling programme of looking at different pieces of work and moving our customer facing parts into C.L.S. There are some significant advantages of doing that. Not only will those colleagues benefit from some of the principles we have around customer activity and trying

to make things easier for customers, but also it means that if we can group those services in a better way around the customer it will come through very clearly in improvements in the experience for Islanders.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Okay, we may come back on that. It is tricky, as you outlined, because it is not technically under this Minister but as you are technically here as responsible it is helpful to us as we work our way through. I am going to pass over now to Deputy Alves who will take over. Thank you.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Thank you very much. I am going to be just following on from what Deputy Pamplin was saying. We have noticed that the learning difficulties, the specialist accommodation project, has been listed as partially deferred. How has it be deferred given that the funding years appear to remain unchanged?

The Minister for Social Security:

Sorry, what special project has been deferred?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Learning difficulties specialist accommodation.

The Minister for Social Security:

It is not in my portfolio. Is it a health one? I am not trying to be unhelpful. That sentence means nothing to me. Have you got the page, Carina, in the Government Plan?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

I am just trying to look for it, hold on. Sorry, it is wrong, ignore that. Apologies, sorry, I will move on.

The Minister for Social Security:

Before we move on, this is our first and you can get me back again because ... I know this has been in there for weeks to make sure we get a meeting but we will make time for you again if there are things ...

Deputy C.S. Alves:

No, no, it is okay. Sorry, I am going to be referring to the special funds, which is on page 125 to 129 of the Government Plan. I am just going to start off with the Health Insurance Fund. The panel was advised in April 2020 that the most recent valuation found the fund to be valued at 83 million. We

also noted the recent transfer of 5.3 million from the fund to support emergency COVID-19 work. What is the fund's current valuation, please?

The Minister for Social Security:

It is roughly still the same. There is no more money coming out of it.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Okay, so what is the disparity between the current value ... so it is still exactly the same?

The Minister for Social Security:

There might be a few ... the only thing that has come out of it was to pay the doctors the 5 point-something million. There will be money coming out of it.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Okay, because the opening balance was about 97 million but we were advised in April 2020 that that was 83, so there has been no change since then?

The Minister for Social Security:

No, nothing has come out of it yet. There is money due to come out of it for the healthcare model.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Okay, so yes that is my next question. Noting that the fund is expected to decline to 35 million by 2024, can we expect new mechanisms to be proposed over the next few years to revive the funding of the Health Insurance Fund?

The Minister for Social Security:

We are going to do a review of the Health Insurance Fund in conjunction with the health team and the healthcare model who are producing that because we need a sustainable net funding going forward. Not necessarily to be called the Healthcare Fund, it could come from something else but that is all in the review. It should all be coming back early next year, hopefully before the Government Plan, because they are 2 quite big bits of work. The review of the Social Security Fund and the Health Insurance Fund. But, yes, we do know that it is well depleted. It has less than half in it over the next 4 years than what it is in it today. We need to make sure that we have a plan going forward on how to get some money to pay for the new healthcare model.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Minister, have you looked at any mechanisms? If you have, what are they?

The Minister for Social Security:

No, no, Deputy. No, we have not looked at anything.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

I am going to move on the Long-Term Care Fund. the Government Plan notes that the introduction of the Jersey Care Model and Care Needs at Home Benefits can be, and I quote: "Expected to reduce the extent of future increases in long-term care expenditure." That is on page 162. What policy work has been initiated to identify future uses of the fund and its funding model?

The Minister for Social Security:

That is the Jersey Care Model, not the Long-Term Care Fund you are talking about? We have just discovered, sorry, Deputy, that the printed pages are about 5 out from the pages online as well. Just great to find out like last night but it is what it is. Are we talking about the Long-Term Care Fund or the Health ...

Deputy C.S. Alves:

It is to do with the Jersey Care Model but also the Care Needs at Home benefit, so that would come out of the Long-Term Care Fund, would it not?

The Minister for Social Security:

Care Needs at Home, are they the Care Needs at Home that we had to postpone this year because we had to go into people's houses?

Deputy C.S. Alves:

I am just thinking ...

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes. No, they do not come out. Geoff will remember these people as soon as I say it. There is about 100 people who are over 18 who still are on income support but they need to go on to long-term care but they have so specific needs. Geoff will remember that. Deputy Southern, remember that from when he was here, it literally could be for some families may need extra food, some families might need having to do washing 5 times a day, et cetera, et cetera. The officers know these families, so does their adult social worker. They have all been going in and it was sort of getting there until COVID and we have now got to find a way if they are happy for people to start going back in and we will talk to these people face-to-face, so that is that one. The wording is slightly ... yes, it could be a bit misleading but that is those people that we are talking about.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Okay, thank you, Minister. I am going to hand over to the Deputy of St. John, Deputy Pointon. Thank you.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Could you just tell me, those people who are not being visited now, are they going to start being visited in 2021?

The Minister for Social Security:

As I say, Deputy Southern, the officers and the adult social worker know him very well. We are trying to set up some Teams or Zoom. Some are happy with that, some are not. It is not definitely we cannot ... this will not happen until January 2021. We are finding a way ... that is why the money is in there. We will find a way to get to them, unless COVID gets worse and these people are very vulnerable in certain cases with extra medical needs. It is one of those things, it is unfortunate but we will work to their timescale basically, when they are happy and we can go in and talk to them properly.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay, Minister, thanks very much for volunteering to answer my questions. We mentioned the Long-Term Care Fund, there is a question I would like to ask about the maximum payable to any individual in any one week from the Long-Term Care Fund.

The Minister for Social Security:

That is a very wide question. The maximum payable, I think it is £1,000 ... yes, if they got everything and they had nothing else, it would be about £1,400 a week.

The Deputy of St. John:

£1,400.

The Minister for Social Security:

A week, yes.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay.

The Minister for Social Security:

Just putting the rates up but that is for care homes. The 1st January that will go up slightly as well with the R.P.I. (Retail Price Index).

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, I am talking about people who are receiving care in their home, rather than ...

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes, okay, lovely. We will go on to talk about the Social Security Fund and, again, another question which relates to the ongoing questions. We are going to be mentioning the N.E.S.S.I.E. (New Employment Social Security Information Exchange) project. I am wondering for the benefit of the people listening and then watching this, could you explain what the acronym means, please?

The Minister for Social Security:

N.E.S.S.I.E., New Employment Social Security Information Exchange and it is the computer that does all of the payments and it needs upgrading. It is on its last legs. It has lost the SS in the middle.

The Deputy of St. John:

Right, okay. Thanks for that. How will the decision not to pay future grants into the Social Security Fund until 2023 affect family friendly legislation going forward and given that the 2020 plan funded these changes through the fund?

The Minister for Social Security:

No, family friendly ... if you remember I took an amendment; it is for money above the standard earnings limit and that is still being paid in. I have lodged the family friendly and the amounts and it is not affected at all. The States grant does not affect those at all.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay, thanks for that. But you can see where the question was coming from because the ...

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes.

The Deputy of St. John:

Yes. With a plan to return to balanced budgets by 2024, how will the Social Security Fund's role change to adapt to the plan? Can we expect the current arrangements for the fund to change dramatically, regardless of the outcome of the proposed review?

The Minister for Social Security:

I could not answer, they may change, they may not change. I need the review because I need to look at everything in the round. The Chief Minister wants to look at everything in the round as well. We are very lucky with our Social Security Fund that we do have 6 years' worth of money in there now, if another penny did not go into it we would still have enough to pay the benefits but that is not happening. We are still getting money paid into it all the time. But we want to look at and we want to make sure that everything is being paid right; we need to look at it. Again, that is going to come back early, hopefully, July. I am pushing the Council on this one because I am the guardian, if you like, the Social Security Funds all come under me. I need to make sure they are in as good a state, if not better, when I leave.

The Deputy of St. John:

Thank you for that, Minister. We move on to N.E.S.S.I.E. now, with the benefits and payments N.E.S.S.I.E. project not expected to be completed until 2024, how will this affect the planned review of the Social Security Fund?

The Minister for Social Security:

No, N.E.S.S.I.E. is a piece of equipment, Deputy Pointon. Yes, it is basically an update of kit. The review ... this will be officers, this will be looking at everything but N.E.S.S.I.E. does not affect anything. It is the old equipment needs replacing to do a better job, as we bring in different payments in together.

[14:45]

The Deputy of St. John:

Thank you for that. Can we expect the funding plan for this review to be presented in the future Government Plans?

The Minister for Social Security:

The Social Security review is going to be paid for out of the fund.

The Deputy of St. John:

Will the review continue annually so that the project is updated?

The Minister for Social Security:

No. The review will be the review, there might be some really hard political decisions to make with a lot of evidence to back it up. But, no, are you muddling up N.E.S.S.I.E. or are you muddling up the review of the Social Security Fund?

The Deputy of St. John:

No, I am following our question plan, Minister.

The Minister for Social Security:

Okay, sorry.

The Deputy of St. John:

We will move on then to income support costs, in 2021 we have £7,498,000 are billed for income support costs; that falls in 2022 to £5,249,000 million and so on. Have alternative costs been prepared, should there be a delay in the preparation and delivery of a vaccine, given that those falls in expenditure presumably are expected to be the result of the COVID virus moving out of our society?

The Minister for Social Security:

The extra money which I have got for this year's income support is about £7 million and a bit and that was unforeseen because of COVID and these are unemployed people.

The Deputy of St. John:

Right.

The Minister for Social Security:

What I think I said earlier, the last 100,000 people have never really been unemployed, so these are the people that I want a bit more investment to help them get back to work, maybe cross-skilling. Can you say that figure again? Did you say 700 and something?

The Deputy of St. John:

I have got a figure, which is in millions, £7,498,000.

The Minister for Social Security:

Sorry, yes, yes, that is fine. I have got that figure. I thought you said 700 and ...

The Deputy of St. John:

No, no. The costs of income support are billed to be falling up to 2024, the question was if there is not a vaccine, an effective vaccine come into the market, have you anticipated that and do you have contingencies to perhaps spend more on income support than you had predicted?

The Minister for Social Security:

I had not put the 2 together. It is a very good point possibly, that if you do not get a vaccine less people can work but we have got quite a few people getting back to work now and that is a forecast of what we can see the economy doing, dipping, people being unemployed and then going back up again. Will it be better when we have got a vaccine? The problem being, Deputy, if we have already lost those jobs you can have some very healthy unemployed people when they have got the vaccine but they have got no job. I had not put the 2 together. I have to have a think more about that one. I cannot see that a vaccine would help, unless we had had it 5 months ago.

The Deputy of St. John:

It might help if we were to get on top of the virus in the Island, which might enable people to occupy their employed status.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Can I just ask, what is the reason for the reduction?

The Minister for Social Security:

The reduction in what, Deputy? It has gone up £7 million.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

The reduction that they are obviously talking about is from 2021 to 2024 it goes down from £7 million to, for example, £4.5 million.

Director General, Customer and Local Services:

Perhaps I can just jump in, so based upon the F.P.P. forecasts we expect that, all things being equal, the number of people who are unemployed will reduce and alongside that the number of people claiming income support will reduce and that is where you can see the reduction between 2021 and 2023. The reason why 2024 goes up is because in last year's Government Plan forecasts there was no inflation added in anywhere for 2024. In our COVID income support bid we have included inflation in the last year. Inflation was already built in for 2021, 2022 and 2023 but for 2024, there is no inflation built in in 2024. We have added that in in this bid at the same time. Based upon the F.P.P. forecast the panel will be pleased to know that it is expected that unemployment A.S.W. (actively seeking work) numbers will drop every year over the next 4 years.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

That is a hell of an inflation rate you have got there, from £3.6 million to £4.5 million; that is a big inflation rate. Are you sure that is what you have done there?

Director General, Customer and Local Services:

Yes, so the inflation added into 2024 is for the whole income support budget, so it will be a couple of million pounds. So if you maybe remove £2 million from that figure of £4.5 million, then it becomes about £2.5 million, so that you can see that it is a more gradual reduction.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

While you are on there, can you tell us what the overall impact on the funds that you are responsible for has been? Because contributions obviously have gone down, you have had to pay out extra in terms of benefit income support and other benefits I presume. You have had the C.R.E.S.S. (COVID Related Emergency Support Scheme) scheme to fund and the Long-Term Care Fund, again, 1 per cent, it is still 1 per cent. Contributions have gone down but the costs are going up. Have you got and, if so, where is it, a picture of what the overall financial impact has been on the funds that you run, Minister?

The Minister for Social Security:

We deferred the 2 first quarters, I have got that figure somewhere. People can pay that back, they will be paying back and some people are already paying back. They got some more money off ... their businesses were not as hit as they thought it would be. So that was £65 million. The 2 per cent over that we have deferred for the employee is going to cost £26 million and that is for 8 months but then that goes straight back up because that is for employees, so their employer will be taking that. We have funded ...

Deputy G.P. Southern:

I think you have gone mute, Minister.

The Minister for Social Security:

Sorry. No, I was thinking and trying to read something, off the back of my head I cannot at the moment think of anything else. Ian might have something.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay, Minister, shall we leave the section there and ...

Director General, Customer and Local Services:

Yes. The Minister has covered the £65 million States grant, the £26 million for 2 per cent employees' reduction as part the fiscal stimulus programme. We also saw, obviously, a more general reduction in the amount of contributions that were being collected anyway because less people were working. I have not got that figure quite to hand but we can obviously give that to the panel. But then in some cases we have seen slightly less benefits being claimed, for example, sickness benefits, not quite as many of those have been claimed and we have perhaps seen slightly less than expected there,

so that is obviously helping the fund in that sense. But there are a multiple set of factors just for the Social Security Fund. The Health Insurance Fund, there has also been the £5 million that the States have supported the Minister in covering for those vulnerable adults and also to support the doctors. But the Health Insurance Fund, we would have also received less income. The impacts on the Long-Term Care Fund are slightly more mixed because perhaps less people have been going into care homes, because obviously during the coronavirus period they were perhaps were being cared for at home. But also we will see perhaps less income come through because less people have perhaps been earning as much income and, therefore, they will pay less long-term care charges.

The Deputy of St. John:

Okay. I am going to hand you over now to Deputy Alves.

The Minister for Social Security:

Thank you.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Thank you. Okay, Minister, so I am going to be referring on the electronic version to the annex business case for the N.E.S.S.I.E. system, so page 108. I am not sure what that is on your physical version.

The Minister for Social Security:

I will get there.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Okay. If I just quickly describe what the table looks like, so it says: "Funding identified in the annex as 2021 £250,000 and then 2022 £5 million, 2023 £10 million and 2024 £7.75 million."

The Minister for Social Security:

In my system, Deputy, the annex part numbers are exactly the same, it is page 109 with them figures on and that is brilliant.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Okay. We note that it offers: "A significant opportunity to implement a new support system that will support efficient and effective customer service provision for the next 10 to 15-year period." Will this business case have a wider impact on how benefits are calculated and provided by C.L.S. or will this only affect the technical issues identified with the current N.E.S.S.I.E. support system?

The Minister for Social Security:

I would say the latter. Sorry, the first one. Yes, it is just that it is technical, literally it is technical. It will not interfere with the benefits or anything.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Okay. Would you be willing to provide the panel with the relevant documentation needed to understand the high costs of this project?

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes, yes. Yes, I am getting a nod, Ian Burns can provide you with the business case. There will be a business case under the ... I am sorry, it is a piece of kit that has been known that would need replacing for the last X amount of years, so I do not know how long ago the business plan was. But Ian will give you an update on that and he will provide it.

Director General, Customer and Local Services:

Yes, so these are estimated amounts and part of the spend this year is to build out a more detailed business case. We have been wanting to be able to update the benefit payment systems for a while because the existing system came in in about 2005 and obviously it was planned much earlier than that. One of the things we have been waiting for is the completion of the Revenue Jersey R.M.S. (Revenue Management System) because the last part of that implementation is to start collecting contributions on behalf of the Minister through Revenue Jersey. They will have a system that collects income and, therefore, we will have a system that will pay money out in simple terms. We have been waiting for that. We would not want to develop both systems at the same time. Many of the same people would be involved and it just would not be good prudent business practice to have 2 major systems in a state of change. We have talked about this before but the R.M.S. is being implemented, Revenue Jersey are making good progress and the last bit is that contributions collection, which should go live in the start of 2022, which gives us the confidence now that we can start planning the replacement or updating of our benefit payment systems. I would say the system is likely to be very different than the existing system. The existing system is bespoke, it is quite hard-wired in and the new system will be very flexible, more modular and obviously more in tune with the current technology of today. Of course, naturally, supporting much more online options for customers who want to access support online but also still allowing, of course, us to support those who need the most support through face-to-face and telephone contact.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Okay. What work, if any, have you undertaken on the possibility that the findings and recommendations of the review into the Social Security Fund may lead to additional infrastructure being required alongside N.E.S.I.E.?

The Minister for Social Security:

It should not do. I think it is because, as I say, it will be a good bit of kit and it will be ... and, as I say, we are having the review, the review will tell us exactly where we are and then we will have to make, I would imagine, more political decisions. But the kit will be able to deal with what we decide to do, if we decide to do anything. It is not a definite but I have got to have this review.

[15:00]

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Can I come in there just briefly? You just said a political decision, again the second time you have done that today. When you are talking about the review of the Social Security system and the fund, do those political decisions involve reduction in funding or reduction in eligibility or reducing the size of benefits in any way?

The Minister for Social Security:

Deputy, I do not know the answer to that because I have not done the review. I am really not trying to not give you the answer. This is a big piece of work. I know it is starting early, officers are meeting. I want it done, I want assurances. I did go back and say there may be no change at all but if you look at all the different things that go into the Social Security Fund and what is paid out, yes, and let us hope this is the worst year we have ever had. What happens if something else goes wrong or COVID does get really bad again? I am having the review, I cannot say what is in it or out of it. You will be one of the first panels to see the review in confidence because that is how we always work. There will be things in there that we might want to do, do not have to do or it might just say: "You have to do this or this is the amount of money you need to keep going after 2025 or 2026." But I really do not know what it is going to say. Next year is going to be hard, hard work and to make some decisions going forward.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

It is a case of nothing is ruled out yet, it is all on the table?

The Minister for Social Security:

Absolutely, nothing is ruled out.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Okay, thank you. I am going to hand over to our Chair, Deputy Le Hegarat.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Thank you, Deputy Alves. I want to just ask a few questions in relation to financial independence in old age, which we note has been deferred; £27,000 of the allocated £150,000 for 2020 was spent, where was the remaining funds released to?

The Minister for Social Security:

At the moment they have gone back to the centre. We had a good start, we were making some really good progress and we had a cross-section - Deputy Tadier was on the panel with me - of officers and politicians, the Constable of St. Ouen. Basically at the end of the day independence in old age can even be looked at across the ... because we have got a foundation with the Social Security Fund because at the end of the day it was not free money, somebody has got to pay in and the earlier you pay it in the less you pay for your life to give you money at the end. Yes, it went back to the centre and that is all we spent. I think we met physically the last time in February and had a Zoom team meeting in March, which did not work very well and then COVID, literally I mean it just ... that is where we are.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

That was for 2020, so why is funding for this project planned to reduce when compared to what was allocated in 2021 to 2023 last year? Basically the money has gone back. I note that there is no funding allocated for the project, for example, for 2022, why is that?

The Minister for Social Security:

Because I have deferred it, we are not doing it.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay then, how long have you deferred it for?

The Minister for Social Security:

I have deferred it for next year but, as I said, there could be some strands that come out of the review of the Social Security Fund that then I can start it up again. It has all got to work a bit more together. Again, as we have started to do the review, there is only one person who pays the money and they are people who live in Jersey. They may be workers, they may be employers, employees, taxpayers, Social Security payers, then we wanted to take some more money out. It can be wrapped up in there. It is something that I am still interested in. Now I am remembering, it was very, very tight to get it consulted on, to get it through, get legislation through. It was never going to start until at least 2023, 2024 but we wanted to get all those ducks in a row. There is no way, with all the other work, we could have done that. It is still there. The money is gone for the moment but see what the Social Security Fund review, the big fund, says and it would be a way to get people to pay a bit into their

own pensions. It could be that, it could come up there is something else that we may need to do and they may need to do but, again, it is too early to tell.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay. Obviously the project has been deferred and with the impact of COVID-19, what work has been done to make improvements to this policy before it is introduced or you have just basically stopped doing anything?

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes, I have just stopped it, just stopped doing anything on the financial independence in old age, yes.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay. The project's budget that was released for 2020 due to the new timeframe, what is the status of the contract with D3P, the Global Pension Consulting who commenced work on key sections of this draft report with Ministers?

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes, that completely finished, yes.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

The work with D3P, just to confirm for myself, this contract, has that been completed or has it been terminated or suspended, which of those is it?

The Minister for Social Security:

It was completed. We asked them to do a preliminary bit of work first and they have done that. Then we were looking to go further around January time and we met once after that in February and then, no, we are not going to do anything else. If we had gone forward we probably would have used them but it just did not happen.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Right. Just to sort of wrap this up, it has been deferred and the work that was commissioned with D3P has been completed, so are we able to see the conclusion of that work and the report that they submitted?

The Minister for Social Security:

We had a draft report. I will have to chase it up for you because we had a draft report and then they were going to do something else and I am not sure where we are with that. But I will check that for you and I will get back to you, yes.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Can you remind me, Minister, what was the cost of that work, that contract?

The Minister for Social Security:

Again, for the first part I cannot remember it being that expensive but I will come back to you. I have not got it ...

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Yes, obviously it would be helpful for the panel if we could have - a reminder for ourselves - how much the contract was, the work that was done and what was the outcomes of that work done by D3P. I am now going to hand over to Deputy Southern in relation to food costs bonus.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Yes. We notice that there is an increase in the food costs bonus from £308,000 to £340,000, for funding, what causes that rise? What has caused that particular rise? Is it about a greater number of people requiring that bonus or is it some other factor?

The Minister for Social Security:

No, if you remember, Deputy ... now whose panel was it? I think it is the panel headed up by Senator Moore and somebody wrote in to them, the Citizens Advice Bureau, and said this bonus had not been kept up with inflation and they put in an amendment last year. We do not call it the food costs bonus anymore, it is the community costs bonus because it had an extra few things in it. We never fought it in the Assembly, we accepted it; so that is the rise. It was what was passed in the Assembly last year.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

That was catching up with a few years' inflation, was it?

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Okay. If I could move on, we have got this proposal to support home care and carers, Care Needs at Home it is called, yes. It says it is delayed but the funding still appears in 2021 as £620,000. Can

you say what is happening there? Is it delayed, is it abandoned or is there funding for it? Are we going to be able to tie in with what the States Care Model ... Jersey Care Model, is already working on, which is treating people, if they possibly can, in their homes rather than in residential homes?

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes. Ian will have to answer that ...

Deputy G.P. Southern:

It is quite simple, Minister, is it delayed or abandoned?

The Minister for Social Security:

I have got confused.

Director General, Customer and Local Services:

I think at the back of the annex there are the sort of figures that were a start point and then you have to knock off the other changes to budgets to get to where the actual end position is. For example, if there is £400,000 saved, then that comes off of the budget at the back of the annex. It is a financial way of presenting the information at the beginning rather than at the end. But, ultimately, the amount of money that the Minister has in 2021 for the Care Needs at Home project is £150,000 and in 2022 up to 2024 it is £550,000.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Those are different figures to the ones I have got in front of me. I have got a 2021 figure of £620,000. Which is correct? Never mind. Why was this proposition delayed? Why is this proposal, this project delayed? Is it only solely because of COVID? I have got silence now. Has somebody muted, chatting away?

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes, it was me. Yes, these are the same people I described to you, remember when you were an Assistant, we have these few people, I think it is about 100 people, it might be a few more, that are working across with Health and they need to go from income support to long-term care. My officers are going in their homes and so is Health officers and they have all got adult social workers. I remember meeting with the Minister for Health and Social Services, the adult social worker probably mid-February this year and it was all going really well. People were getting to understand it and they were quite happy. There was some money for them to go into their homes, to go into their pockets, to deal with their extra needs. It would not be across the board exactly the same amount because some have different needs and that is why that one is delayed. We want to get it on track as soon as possible. Again, with the COVID people are quite scared about you going in their homes

again now, so it is 2 teams going in, talking to them and assessing exactly what they need. That is what the budget should be, they think it is around that sum.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

So 2 questions there, are these people with multi-morbidities who are very seriously quite ill or are they the group who have traditionally been on income support and getting the impairment component, which they can spend in any way they like and transferring on to the Long-Term Care Fund? The long-term care award must be spent on some aspect of caring, so the grounds have now changed.

The Minister for Social Security:

It is the second group, Deputy.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

All right.

The Minister for Social Security:

You will remember, yes, we have met with them. Yes, yes, that is that group, yes.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Okay.

The Minister for Social Security:

When we met with them you remember they said that one of the issues as well of going over is that they would be worse off because of the different needs they all had in the home. That is literally what we have been trying to do, assess all the different needs, make sure they are not out of pocket. But they are not uniform, there are so many different needs and they are working one-to-one. Again, we have just been kicked right down the can with COVID; they have not met since mid-February I would say in the homes.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Right, okay, I shall plough on a little, if I may, with disability social inclusion, which is labelled a green, is on track. Funding in 2019 £351,000 and funding identified in 2020 £351,000 going up to £576,000. Was this affected by the pandemic or is it perfectly okay?

[15:15]

The Minister for Social Security:

It is still going. We have employed 2 officers, one you know very well and he was very pleased. I just bumped into him before I came along here today. He was on I.T.V. (Independent Television), Anthony Lewis. We have got another one employed. They were slightly put back but they are both now employed. The whole group is in there, they have had to regroup. They are doing lots of different things. I can give you a complete update on that on paper. I will not do it now but I can send you a complete update on the disability inclusion strategy. Also, we have been working hard getting the discrimination in tenants and that is now back on track; it was moved off. You might be going there but I want to let you know because, again, that will go to the Assembly and that will come to your panel as well. Yes, that is being worked through the Community Task Force.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Is it indeed? Can you tell me why in 2021, from 2019 to 2020 estimates, the money goes down from £570,000 to £350,000? Sorry, it says it is on track but the money has been reduced, has it?

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes, I will have to check this exactly but in the 2019 money it was all in my department but it is now across other departments because they need it and I think there is something in sport for a sport disability officer. I will get those areas for you. It is all still there but I should not be running that one because sport is outside now, so the money is still there across different departments.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Just staying on the on-track label, the money has been spent, has it, in each of those years? It has not been sent back to the middle.

The Minister for Social Security:

We only got it ... we had the disability strategy but we had no money until last year; it was the first time we had money.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Yes.

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes. Sorry, this year. This year is the first year and, yes, it will be spent. It was a little bit behind recruiting but, yes, it will be spent, yes.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Yes, sorry, that is my confusion.

The Minister for Social Security:

No, do not be sorry.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

I got that wrong. Now on to efficiencies ...

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Can I interject there for a second? We have just gone through the disability, I think before we get to the efficiency section we have capital projects and Deputy Alves and then I think Deputy Pamplin will take efficiencies at the end.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

It is fine by me but I thought the capital projects learning difficulties thing was ...

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Yes, that has been put in incorrectly.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

That has been down there incorrectly, so that does not get asked, I do not think.

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes, it was not my area apparently.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

Yes, that is right, yes.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay, Deputy Southern, have you finished in relation to the disability strategy then?

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay, I will ask Deputy Pamplin then to take on the efficiencies. Thank you.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

No problem.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Almost there, Minister, we are almost there. Efficiencies then, a key efficiency in the Government Plan is to increase income from new charges and increased costs recovery of existing service charges. The first obvious question for either you yourself or possibly the Director General, who is responsible for Customer and Local Services as he is with us, are there any new service charges planned?

The Minister for Social Security:

No, Deputy, not under my department, my ministry and I am looking across at the D.G. (Director General). He can answer you but I am saying no.

Director General, Customer and Local Services:

The Minister is right, there is no charges that are planned under the Minister's remit.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

While we have you, is there anything that Customer and Local Services will be looking at?

Director General, Customer and Local Services:

In terms of other charges, well I think the migration policy has come out this week and there are charges in there for permissions. It is expected that C.L.S. would be administering and collecting those charges but that is the main focus, I think, in terms of new charges that I am aware of for myself for 2021.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Okay, I appreciate that. Thank you, Ian. Back to you, Minister, the Council of Ministers have an essential recurring efficiency target of £950,000, so to increase income from new charges and increase costs recovery of existing charger services, based on the initial implementation of a fees and a charges framework but from what you have just said there, how much or any of this efficiency target will fall under your department in the years to come?

The Minister for Social Security:

I can only talk about what I know and have discussed this year in the plan. In the plan, none, Deputy.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Could you just talk us through the efficiencies that come under your portfolio? I know, again, I am just looking at my notes here, mostly one-off, speed increases. One of the efficiency targets is consistently reviewing and improving Customer and Local Services and the department as a whole? How confident are you that any efficiencies can be generated year on year that are mentioned?

The Minister for Social Security:

My efficiencies for this year and they are on page 93 or 97, whatever you are looking at online, is the £442,000 and that is made up for the deferral for the care needs, that is going to happen, and £61,000 that is there to improve customer services. That is weird, we have got a saving apparently but it is a post for a health and safety person. Yes, an extra person but it is a saving. It is a restructuring ... it is income, so we are supplying the post, so then we will make more income because of people going to health and safety and doing things like that, yes.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

What is the expected cost of the reviews then you mentioned there that would be undertaken to locate the efficiencies?

The Minister for Social Security:

We are not doing a review to locate efficiencies. I am doing reviews on the whole of the massive ... the big funds, the Social Security Fund and the Health Insurance Fund. Yes, the money is coming out of the funds to pay for it.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Okay, so the money is coming out of the funds and do you know the expected cost of that?

The Minister for Social Security:

No, we are not that far down the line. We have identified what we need to do, we identified where the money will come from to do the review but if you ask me or I can tell you in a few more weeks ... or even maybe, hopefully, before the plan is lodged, debated and obviously if we meet again I will try and find that information, when we have it but I do not have it today. It is not that I cannot give it to you, I definitely do not have it. It has not been done yet, Deputy.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

No, it is fine. It is for all of us as we try and get our heads around it. It is about the whole efficiency things and there is not a lot there. You must have fought quite ferociously if any were suggested to your portfolio, I would imagine, because there does not seem to be much.

The Minister for Social Security:

You are right, Deputy, there is not a lot. Yes, I mean we have a massive benefit spend and they were even putting my red lines in for me, so I would have been fighting. I had done my red lines and then even this other Minister said: "No, you do not want to look at that." But it is just money in

people's pockets, so I did not have to defend too much. But I am also well aware that I have responsibility for the 2 big funds, the Social Security Fund and the Health Insurance Fund.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

You also tell us you have deferred the implementation of the Care Needs at Home project by one year, would this have any impacts on the implementation of the care model, as you see it?

The Minister for Social Security:

No. Deputy Southern really understands this a lot more than me. This is a very, very unique set of people but when I say unique they do not have the same care needs and it is going from one benefit to another and making sure they have got enough money to get the right food they need, the right washing done and it is from one to another. But, as I say, Deputy Southern has met with the group of people, some that they represent and it will not affect the ... this has been going on well before even the healthcare model was mooted, I would say. It is a few people that need to sit down with and really understand and they do not and should not be any worse off because they go from one system to another.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Going back to those efficiencies on page 93, the one you mentioned, the restructuring of the adviser post, what does that consist of? Would it include moving advisers around to C.L.S. or can you give us any more information about that?

The Minister for Social Security:

It is a funny one because it is under the health and safety team, they sort of do tell me things but they are not directly under me. But Ian certainly knows a bit more, so I will let Ian tell you what it is.

Director General, Customer and Local Services:

Yes, as the Minister mentioned, it is a bit unusual to be on a list of efficiency savings, it is giving more money to Justice and Home Affairs and the Health and Safety Inspectorate, which is why the total for the Minister is £442,000 because it nets off against the £461,000 of savings and then they get an additional £19,000, which will go to the Health and Safety Inspectorate. The Health and Safety Inspectorate will use that to employ and support further Health and Safety Inspectorate resources. Obviously looking ahead, there is a significant plan of building work expected, for example, and that is why that money has been allocated to them. It is unusual because it is in a list of savings but it is more money for the Health and Safety Inspectorate.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

That kind of clears it up. Will business cases be produced for each of these projects so we could understand them all and be provided with them, I guess?

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

Great.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Could I just have a last question? Can I ask when we are likely to see this big review of the Social Security funds?

The Minister for Social Security:

Do you mean the end of the review or when it is ...

Deputy G.P. Southern:

When are we likely to see it?

The Minister for Social Security:

It will be starting now and as soon as it is ... yes, we are hoping for a debate in July but, again, as you are my panel, when we have got anything constructive after the new year you will see it first.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Okay, thank you.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay. We have sort of gone through most of our questioning areas, is there any further questions that any of the panel have a desire to ask at this stage?

The Minister for Social Security:

Sorry, were you asking your panel or me, Mary?

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

I was asking the panel. We have gone through the sort of question plan and I was just asking if there was any of the panel members who had further questions that they wished to ask in relation to those questions where they have not been able to maybe get them in before.

The Deputy of St. John:

Not from me, Mary.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

Not from me, I am clear.

Deputy C.S. Alves:

All good here, thanks.

Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

I have always got questions but not for today. Thank you everybody.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Yes, reiterating, I think, what Deputy Southern said earlier because I have had a number of questions and I know that technically the C.L.S. does not necessarily come under this remit. But I would like to be able to see appointments that have been made for people, both from a Social Security perspective but across the piece because there are concerns with the public about not being able to get face-to-face appointments. I know people say: "Yes, all you have to do is ring up and get one", that is not the impression that I am getting. I thought I would take the opportunity now to ask the Director General if that was possible, please, to be able to provide that information across all of the areas within C.L.S. so that we can get a clear picture of exactly what is going on.

[15:30]

Because obviously it is very important, particularly with November coming up and tax returns and everything else. Just really from that perspective I would be grateful for that. If that is all, I would like to say thank you very much to the Minister and the officers that have contributed this afternoon. Thank you to the Scrutiny officers, the panel and also for the members of the public that have taken the time to listen to this public hearing. Thank you.

The Minister for Social Security:

Yes. That will not be a problem, we will do as much as we can to find out who is going in and when and get that out to you, okay.

Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat:

Okay. Thank you very much.

The Minister for Social Security:

Thank you.

The Deputy of St. John:

Thank you, Minister, thank you, Ian, thank you team.

Director General, Customer and Local Services:

Thank you.

The Minister for Social Security:

Thank you.

[15:31]