



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF GUERNSEY

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT

COMMITTEE

Education, Sport & Culture
Public Hearing

HANSARD

Guernsey, Monday, 17th October 2016

No. 2/2016

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Members Present:

Panel Chair: Deputy Peter Roffey
Deputy Laurie Queripel

Mrs Gill Morris – Non-States’ Member
Mr Richard Digard – Non-States’ Member

Mr Mark Huntington – Principal Scrutiny Officer
Mr Alistair Doherty – Committee Advisor

Business transacted

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Scrutiny Management Committee

Education, Sport & Culture Public Hearing

*The Committee met at 2.00 p.m.
in the Cambridge and Delancey Rooms, Beau Sejour Leisure Centre*

[DEPUTY ROFFEY *in the Chair*]

Procedural – Remit of the Committee

The Chairman (Deputy Roffey): Good afternoon everybody, and on behalf of the Scrutiny Management Committee, welcome to the second of what will be regular question and answer sessions with Committee Presidents and other leading policy makers.

The concept of these events is somewhat different to our formal scrutiny reviews, which have very well defined parameters and terms of reference. By contrast, these sessions are far more free-
5 form in nature, the idea really being to shine a light on the work of all States' Committees, and by doing so to increase the transparency of Government in Guernsey.

While this is our second such session, the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture is actually the third Committee to take part, because last month's session had a Waste Strategy theme,
10 which involved two different Committees.

I can also exclusively reveal now, that our next month's Q&A session will be with the President of P&R, Deputy Gavin St Pier.

EVIDENCE OF Deputy Paul Le Pelly, President; Mr Jon Buckland, Chief Secretary; Mr Alan Brown, Director of Education, Committee for Education, Sport & Culture;

The Chairman: I am delighted to welcome this afternoon, as our main witness, the President
15 of Education, Sport & Culture, Deputy Paul Le Pelley. Welcome. (**Deputy Le Pelley:** Afternoon.)
Joining him are two of his officers, Mr Jon Buckland and Mr Alan Brown.

I should stress that the vast majority of our questions are going to be of a political nature, and therefore, we would expect most of the replies to come from the President, but we are, of course,
very happy to allow him to confer with his officers on any matters of a more technical nature.

20 So I think only two things remain for me to do before we get underway. The first is to welcome any members of the public here today. We are delighted to see members of the public taking an interest in local politics, but I must remind you that you are here in the capacity of observers, rather than participants.

25 Lastly, I have to introduce the members of the Panel. On my extreme right, in some ways
anyway, is Deputy Laurie Queripel; next to him is Mrs Gill Morris; my name is Peter Roffey, I will be
chairing today's session; and on my left is Mr Richard Digard.

I am going to start off, and I am going to start with a few general questions. This area has been
flagged up I think a lot in the media, which has come as no surprise.

30 Can I ask, Deputy Le Pelley, are your Committee planning any budget amendments on
1st November?

Deputy Le Pelley: My Committee? No.

35 **The Chairman:** So, I presume you are happy to accept – 'happy' may be the wrong word – you
are willing to accept the 3% reduction in your spending cap as proposed by P&R.

40 **Deputy Le Pelley:** We have discussed the 3% cut, as requested, or suggested, by P&R. What I
would say to you is that part of the reason why we did ask you to defer this particular meeting
until after 1st November was because P&R has not yet presented its Budget, and therefore the
Budget has not been approved, and we have not got confirmation of the 3% plus 5% plus 5% cuts
yet. But we have had our meetings with P&R, and we have told them that we will do our level best
to do those cuts.

45 **The Chairman:** You have submitted your own departmental budget for next year, I presume?

Deputy Le Pelley: I believe we have.

The Chairman: So you know how you are going to stay inside the spending cap?

50 **Deputy Le Pelley:** We are looking at how we are going to be spending our money. We also
have a budget prioritisation exercise going on by PWC. Again, that has not yet come to fruition, so
we will be waiting until they report to us to see exactly where we should be prioritising our
budget cuts.

55 **The Chairman:** So any States' Member who is wondering whether it is responsible to vote for
that cut in your budget, what are you able to tell them about the likely impact on front-line
services, if any?

60 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, we are aiming, as much as possible, to not have any front-line cuts,
but as we go into the 5% in 2018 and 2019, I am pretty sure that is going to be difficult not to
have.

65 **The Chairman:** I was going to ask: obviously you have not thought about the detail of how
you will comply with that, but you have got a handle on educational spending, so you must know
what the overall impact is likely to be on what is about a 12½% cut in funding. You say that that is
likely to have an effect on front-line services.

70 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, at the moment we are just looking at 2017. I think we will take it one
step at a time. 2017 is a 3% cut. We have met with P&R, we have told P&R that we will do our
very, very best to hit that target. It is going to be very tough.

I think that people in Guernsey really do need to come to grips with the fact that these are
austere times. It might not be a term that people want to hear, but we have been going along the
route of spending more than we are getting in, for quite some time. We have been spoilt in a way,
with being able to use monies that have been put aside in previous years, to actually enable us to
75 carry on spending at that kind of level, but I think it is coming to a crunch time. It is not just

Education, I think the whole of Guernsey, the whole of the States is going to have to grasp this nettle that we cannot ... I think it was Deputy Fallaize that gave the analogy that people are wanting 30p-in-the-pound services but are only prepared to pay 20p in the pound to get them – that cannot carry on.

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Mrs Morris: Deputy Le Pelley, you said that you would do your level best to meet your budget cuts. Can you give us an example of things that you might do?

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Deputy Le Pelley: Well, without going too far down the line of telling you where exactly they might be, because that may impinge upon people that need to be told privately beforehand – and the actual Budget debate really should be within the States rather than in a public hearing like this, because I would much prefer to be debating it in front of my fellow Deputies, rather than without them being present – but, we have made some savings. Some have been done on combining jobs; some have been removing certain duties where they are no longer required. There have been some savings on being a bit cleverer with our transport. There have been some changes to certain duties within the schools.

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Deputy Queripel: Can I just ask in regard to not only the cuts but are you looking at perhaps ways to somehow increase your revenue via charges for facilities that are used in the school and things?

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Deputy Le Pelley: Well, just to remind everybody that we are not just Education. We are the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, and within the Sport & Culture comes Beau Sejour, where we are actually sitting now. I have been talking to people in the Sport & Culture section of things to see if they can raise their revenue. In fact one of them has come up with the idea of, if they could actually increase their intake by 3% would that be the same as a 3% target. I welcome that, if we can actually improve the services at the same time as we actually improve the revenue that would be a double whammy.

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The Chairman: You have mentioned you are not just Education; you are Sport & Culture. Education is such an imperative; is there a danger where this 12½% cuts over the next three years, the soft underbelly, the easier targets will be Sport & Culture?

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Deputy Le Pelley: Well, I am sure you will know that I have come from doing four years on Culture & Leisure, and in those four years, I was very much involved in the sport side of it, and the culture side of it. I have tried as hard as I can to represent that section.

115

You are right, it could be seen as a soft underbelly, where bigger cuts could be taken. I will try and resist that as much as I can. Obviously, if there is too much fat then obviously that is where it will be taken from. But to be honest when Culture & Leisure were looking at their accounts, two or three years or so ago, under the FTP requirements, we actually took a 16% cut when everybody else was taking a 10%. So, I think they are down to the bone to be quite honest. There is not a lot more saving to be made in there. Where they are going to be able to help us, I think, is by increasing their revenue.

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The Chairman: Where are you on local management for schools, and the devolving of budgets and powers to individual schools?

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Deputy Le Pelley: That was one idea which came out of the Mulkerrin Report, which I think I could have written as well, I think most teachers probably could. It is under review, we are looking to see how and when that could be implemented.

For the benefit of those who do not know exactly what it is, it is where certain amounts of monies are given to the schools – the school committees – for them to actually administer their

own finances. It works in certain areas in the UK. Many years ago, when I was an Open University student I did local management of schools as part of the governing schools' Open University programme, and I know that it has been very successful in parts of the UK.

The Chairman: Would devolving the powers to the head teachers etc. allow you to look at savings at your central administration?

Deputy Le Pelley: It might do. As I say, it is early days yet. We are still looking into it, we are still investigating things. I think that it would be important that it is not just the head teachers that would access that; it would probably have to be a management panel as well, otherwise you could just have one head teacher just on their own. I think there needs to be more backup than that.

The Chairman: Before moving away from budget cuts, you have said that Guernsey people were being unrealistic in their expectations. Our teacher/pupil ratios are somewhat better, I think, than in the UK, so is there any risk that those might move in the wrong direction in order to balance the books?

Deputy Le Pelley: Well, at the moment, we are sort of talking about 24, 25 students per class. I think they are slightly higher in two schools, which have special arrangements because of the areas that they actually serve. I am not quite sure exactly what the UK averages are, but 24, 25 is a comfortable number. If I go back to my teaching day I was quite often asked to teach groups of children in excess of 30, so it is certainly down in the right direction.

Deputy Queripel: While we are on budget, just one more on the financial side of things. You have spoken about trying to resist the temptation of cutting culture and the sport aspect of your offering, because that could be seen as a soft target. I am sure you are aware that there is a growing body of research, and evidence that shows that students taking part in cultural and artistic activities actually benefit. It adds value in regard to the academic side of things. So, do you think, if you were tempted to make cuts in the culture and sports side of things, that actually it would backfire and it might have an impact on the academic side of things as well?

Deputy Le Pelley: I think you are right, Deputy Queripel, and not only that, but it is also to do with being fit and healthy. The amount of money that, if we do not have fit and healthy youngsters, who may become more obese adults ... just what is that going to do to our health budget? I know that the health budget at the moment has been ring-fenced for the next three years, and I think they are going to need it, because health obviously is a very, very big spender, and it is being probably overused – certainly used to the hilt. But I think if we allow our young people, or anybody in society really, to not manage their body weight, and to then become unhealthy as a result of that, we are going to be paying for it in the long run, a lot more than if we pay out a reasonable amount now to provide artistic, linguistic and sporting facilities.

So, the three or four commissions that we have got – and I say three or four, because the Guernsey Language Commission is not quite a commission yet, but the other three, the Youth Commission, the Sports Commission, the Arts Commission – they are doing good work, and they are engaging people, and getting people in society to actually work, be active, it is not just sort of physical fitness, it is the mental fitness as well.

The Chairman: Before I move on from budgetary issues, are there any other questions from Panel members? No.

Then can we move on to the question of pre-school education. You inherited a scheme that had been approved not that long ago by the last States'. What made you revisit that? What was the catalyst for you taking a fresh look at that?

180 **Deputy Le Pelley:** What we did is we implemented the previous Committee's proposals, as recommended by our officers. But we did have a very, very, tight timescale for delivery on that package.

The previous Committee had taken a view regarding rates, and to not allow top-ups. That was their decision. We needed or the officers needed a decision in order to plan for January 2017. It did not give us much time. So we had to pick up any shortfall in provision.

185 The industry made it quite plain very, very, quickly to us, that they were not happy with our decision, with the previous board's decision, because they wanted to have a top-up scheme. As a result of that we had meetings with them. A working party was formed. We had two of our board members on that working party – Deputies Meerveld and Dudley-Owen – and they met with representatives of the industry, and GPLA. We thrashed out what they thought, going forward, would be something that would be good for the industry.

190 Now, we have identified a new way forward. It will require a different approach from September 2017. It will allow a top-up with a £5 voucher. That means that providers will be able to add something extra on top for extra things given. We are hoping, also, the household income, which at the present time is £150,000 will actually be reviewed. Now, we understand that that is not in line with the Resolution of the States. I will give you my personal view. I think that the universal coverage probably is not the right way forward, for me. But it is not a closed door, I am happy to look further at it. I would much prefer to actually target people that we think, that society thinks, really do need the help.

200 I understand, and a case has been made, that universality will probably engage more people, and we want to engage everyone, to give everyone an equal and fair opportunity. But for me, there is just a little niggle in the back of my head, which says that if a family is on a joint income of £400,000, and they were already paying for child support, or learning support, then really we are giving them something for free that they did not really need and that we could have targeted at the people who really do need it, perhaps by giving them 30 hours and funding that.

205 **The Chairman:** But doesn't the top up scheme almost encourage that, because if people were buying very expensive child care of £7 or £8 an hour, you are now saying 'have £5 towards it and just pay the difference', and those people clearly could have afforded that care without that extra money?

210 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I think we are going to have to be very, very, careful that we do not have a two-tier system. There are some providers that do not actually charge the £5 at the moment. We are sort of benchmarking what they provide for what they charge. If people start to abuse the system, there will have to be various arrangements and contracts made to ensure that people do not abuse the system.

The Chairman: I have got lots more questions, but I can see hands going up both sides.

220 **Deputy Queripel:** Has your Committee been keeping an eye on the pre-school provision offering in Jersey. They put a system in place, now, that has a sliding scale in regard to incomes, and they have got thresholds. Have you kept an eye on that? Is that something that perhaps you might consider following, or modelling our system on?

225 **Deputy Le Pelley:** It is still a work in progress, and the working party are still keeping an eye on everything that is going on. They are meeting with various people. That is something that is ongoing.

230 We have also, and you will remember that we actually made a statement in the States' Chamber on 21st September, and I did say then that I would be talking to representatives from the Social Security Department, and also from the Health & Social Care Department – whatever their names might be these days, because I have not quite caught up with everything that has

changed! But we do need to keep everybody in the loop. This has got to be joined-up thinking, joined-government. I do not want us sort of working in silos. We do need to engage with everybody to make sure that we give the Guernsey people the best value for their money.

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Mr Digard: Deputy Le Pelley, it was just to pick up on, following on from you saying 'joined up'. I was intrigued: why did it take two stabs at getting the funding right with the industry, do you think? The funding package.

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Deputy Le Pelley: I think you are talking about two different Governments. The first one was something which was decided and agreed by the previous board, and we were asked to ratify that very, very, quickly into our term. We are talking about days. In fact, literally days of our being in office. A very quick decision was required, and that was a decision that was made, under some duress because of time, and it obviously did not satisfy the vast majority of providers –

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Mr Digard: I am sorry, I think that is really what I am trying to drive at, because clearly from the outset, what was proposed did not suit the industry, but it was the same advice that spanned two administrations.

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Deputy Le Pelley: It was a decision that had been reached by the previous board that we had to ...

Mr Digard: That in your view was wrong?

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Deputy Le Pelley: That in our view needed to be further looked at. We did actually have that engagement with the industry, who felt that they were going to have some difficulties in delivering it.

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The Chairman: Are you saying that a lot of industry felt that they could not provide childcare for £5.90 an hour?

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Deputy Le Pelley: It was a model that they were not happy with. They were providing the bulk of them: 21 or 22 out of the 28 providers made an approach to us to see if they could talk things through in a different way, and that is what we are going to be proposing. It is not finalised, finalised, because there is still to go, but we will be making a recommendation to the States in the future, and the States will decide. It will come back to the States' Assembly for them to have a look at, exactly what is being proposed, and if any of the Members ... well, there are two of you who are sitting in the States – if you do not like it, or you want to amend it, or change it, or question it, there will be plenty of time.

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We made a statement in September 2016, to give everybody fair warning, one year's advance notice, that we were looking at changing the situation, or changing the system.

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Mrs Morris: In terms of practicality, so your proposal is that this will max out for people on a joint income of £150. How are you going to do the means testing?

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Deputy Le Pelley: Well, there are different ways of doing that. How, I would prefer to do it would be to actually have ... this is a joint income, of either two mums, two dads, or father and mother, we are not bothered about what the actual home background is, but if there is a joint income within that family, the £150,000 we think is far, far, far, too high –

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Mrs Gill Morris: That is not what I asked.

Deputy Le Pelley: Sorry.

285 **Mrs Morris:** What I asked was, how do you intend to assess that? Are you intending to get the information from the tax authority?

Deputy Le Pelley: Yes, we would like to see people banded so that we can work out what the ... We do not want to know their exact income, but it would be useful, if people were in a certain tax bracket, or a certain income bracket, that that could be identified. We would not have to challenge every single one; you could do it randomly, to just check that people were actually being honest in what they were declaring.

295 **Mrs Morris:** So you are expecting the public to declare their income to you as well as the tax authority.

Deputy Le Pelley: They would be telling us that they believe they are entitled to free child care or not.

300 **Mrs Morris:** How many staff do you think it will need to manage that process?

Deputy Le Pelley: That depends on how many people you decide you are going to spot check on.

305 **The Chairman:** But you want to bring it down: presumably, the lower the headroom, the more people will have to be checked.

Deputy Le Pelley: That is true, and I think that £150,000 is quite a lot of money for people to be getting a free service for.

310 **The Chairman:** Just coming back to this top-up business. If lots of pre-schools did not feel they were able to provide it within £5.90, presumably, even fewer will be able to provide the service for £5. Therefore, those families that cannot afford to pay any top up are going to be very limited aren't they, in the range of pre-schools that they will be able to attend?

315 **Deputy Le Pelley:** That is a possibility, and it is something that we are going to be keeping a very, very close eye on over the next two terms. We have got until September 2017 to iron all those little anomalies out, and we will be keeping a very, very close eye on exactly what is going on in the first two terms.

320 We do not want businesses to be put out of business. We certainly do not want to see people making money out of the States' system. We are in charge of the public purse, and we want to give value for money. We have an understanding with the providers that they are going to be fair, and honest, and reasonable in what they provide. If they do not, then we will have to bring in some form of legislation, some form of rules and regulations that they sign up to, that will make sure that they do not make money out of this system.

325 **The Chairman:** I think what I am trying to drive at is people from poorer backgrounds may end up having to send their children to pretty basic – because they cannot pay any extra – pre-schools that can afford to do it for £5 now, whereas the middle-class playgroups, if you like, will get a £5 subsidy towards a much more lavish procedure. We started off trying to have an inclusive system; aren't we going to have almost a divisive system here?

330 **Deputy Le Pelley:** There is always going to be a chance for people who want to have some kind of super facility. They are always going to be able to buy extra things in. I do not think you can stop that. But we are looking for people to be able to self-declare what their income is, and

that the States will pick up any shortfall, should there be any shortfall. That is an undertaking we will give. If there is a shortfall, the States will pick it up.

340 **The Chairman:** You have said that you are going to run the old system, or the system that was approved by the States' for two terms, then review it, and if the States' agree with you, you are going to change it, but the States' may or may not agree with you.

Deputy Le Pelley: If the States' do not agree, we will not change it.

345 **The Chairman:** Does it make it really difficult for parents and pre-school providers to plan, because you send your child to somewhere, and you do not know whether the deal is going to be the same in two terms time or not?

350 **Deputy Le Pelley:** That is why we want to move ahead with the negotiations as soon as possible. We have given ourselves until September 2017. We need to get cracking on that, and we will be doing that as soon as we can.

The Chairman: Is there any side of you that says that this is sort of going back on a deal? There was a package given to the States, wasn't there? Cut down on the amount of family allowance paid and in return £5.90 an hour was going to go for pre-schools.

355 Now it might be, if you get your way, £5 hour. Is that not changing one side of the equation without changing the other?

Deputy Le Pelley: There will be some balancing acts to do. As I said, we are talking with Health, and also with Social Security, to see exactly how that will all shape out, and we have to have a decision, I believe, by March 2017. We hope to have a decision well before that.

The Chairman: How is the self-evaluation system going to work? You are expecting the pre-school providers to basically evaluate themselves. Can you explain how that will work, and how much external validation there will be of that?

370 **Deputy Le Pelley:** The very first year is going to be a soft lead in to what is going on. There will be some very definitive rules and regulations that have to be complied with, and if people fail to hit those targets then they are obviously going to have to ... Well, there will be an assessment and they will have to come up to the right standard. If they do not come up to the right standard, measures will be put in place – I am not exactly sure what they are just yet, but measures will be put in place – to ensure that they actually raise their standards.

375 **Deputy Queripel:** Just bearing in mind that family allowance will be used to fund, to some extent, the pre-school provision, and then because of that some families might feel it is unfair, if they do not access the service and yet they are still losing some of their family allowance. Have you got any plans or initiatives in place to encourage those parents to access the service, and how can that loss of family allowance, do you think, be mitigated for those people who do not want to access the service?

380 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, first of all, the P&R were going to reduce the family allowance by £2.40, whether this was coming in or not. That was a decision that had been made that they were going to take that £2.40 off the income.

385 We successfully asked if we could use that same amount of money to actually fund this. So, yes, I can see there is a link-up and a tie-up there, but in fact that cut was already going to happen, no matter what.

The Chairman: That is a revelation to me, as somebody who was not in the States'. The impression was certainly given that there was a deal here, and that it was being reduced to help fund this scheme.

That is not the case?

Deputy Le Pelley: I understood, and I may be wrong, that P&R were going to reduce family allowance by £2.40 for 2017. I am happy to hand over to my ...

Mr Buckland: Yes, I think when Social Security & Treasury & Resources at the time were taking forward proposals, there was an intention, or a desire, to actually phase out the family allowance over a period of time. At the time, Education were then looking at a number of options to fund the gap, to fund the universal entitlement, and so that was where the proposal was taken to Treasury & Resources, and Social Security, saying we would like to hypothecate an element of family allowance to target it towards the universal entitlement.

Deputy Queripel: Could I just push that a bit more? I did ask you, have you got any plans or initiatives to promote the pre-school provision, so that as many people as possible access it, or you encourage as many people as possible to access it? Have you got anything in mind at this stage?

Deputy Le Pelley: Well, it is down to Education, I think. You do not need to have lots and lots of proof. Youngsters who do not go into pre-school are at a disadvantage when they go into school. I would imagine that most people would accept that.

That does not mean that everybody is going to, necessarily, take up this provision that is offered, because there may be other arrangements that have already been made. It may be that grandparents are already being used to do the child supervision, and it may be that those grandparents see that as useful way of actually being in contact with their grandchildren. It may be a happy situation where both children and grandchildren, and the parents, are happy for that to continue. So, we cannot force people to actually take up this provision. But, I think it can be shown very, very, easily that there is a massive advantage in taking up this 15 hours' provision.

The Chairman: We need to move on in a minute, but Mr Digard.

Mr Digard: Thank you.

Can I just clarify that I understood Mr Buckland's response correctly, that P&R's intention is to phase out family allowance over the next five or 10 years, or it desires to phase it out?

Mr Buckland: I think, again, this was the previous term. It was Treasury & Resources and Social Security: they wanted to reduce that over time.

Mr Digard: So you do know whether it is still on the agenda or not?

Mr Buckland: No.

Mr Digard: Thank you.

The Chairman: You said earlier that your personal view is that the £150,000 cap was too high. If it was brought down, would that allow you to pay more per hour for the provision of child care, because obviously more people would fall outside the scheme?

Deputy Le Pelley: I would like to think it would be a saving for the people of Guernsey. We are responsible for the public purse, and if people are ... £150,000 is quite a reasonable income. If you

440 were a carer for somebody who was disabled, your cut-off is £95,000, and to me, I used to be
assistant to the Disability Officer, and I think that carers get a pretty poor deal, compared to what
these people are going to be offered. Something in the region of £95,000 would be a better
benchmark to use. I am not suggesting that is the figure that we would come to, but it is a figure
445 that is already out there, and if it is a sensible figure for people who are looking after disabled, or
people that can have problems, then that seems to a fair and reasonable amount to be looking at.

The money – you said actually would there be more chance for people to profiteer? I hope not.
I am hoping it would be a saving for the State.

The Chairman: I was not worried about profiteering; it was the opposite. I was worried that at
450 £5 an hour you might be really limiting the range of pre-schools that people who cannot afford a
top-up would be able to access.

Deputy Le Pelley: There will certainly be an RPI link to it as far as the provider is concerned.
But there are some providers at the moment who are not charging £5. So as I understand it, they
455 are not looking to charge £5 for what they are delivering. If they are charging at the moment
£3.90, that is what they are going to be charging. They are not going to say, 'We are going to add
an extra £1.10 on and thank you very much'.

The Chairman: Final question on pre-school.
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Mrs Morris: Deputy Le Pelley, do you think it is appropriate, when you are in negotiation with
the schools and these proposals have not yet been to the States, to refer to the potential for
'profiteering' in the pre-school system?

Deputy Le Pelley: I mentioned the word because it was the question that was asked –
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Mrs Morris: I do not think that was the word that was used.

Deputy Le Pelley: It was not used, but I am just making sure that there would not be any
470 element of that allowed.

The Chairman: Okay. I think we will move on now to secondary education, and Mr Digard is
going to start the questioning.

Mr Digard: Thank you.
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I heard your interview on the radio this morning, on the back of your policy letter today, and I
thought, 'That sounds jolly sensible in the circumstances.' I just wondered, why has it taken seven
months to get to this stage?

Deputy Le Pelley: Why has it taken seven months to get this stage? Can I read you something,
480 would you mind?

Mr Digard: It depends what it is! *(Laughter)*

Deputy Le Pelley: It is quite a learned treatise. It was an article in the newspaper some little
485 time ago and it refers to:

"A brand new Education Department and a brand new States would need a year or two to come up to speed on the
important issues involved."

It is a line, or a couple of lines, from an article in the newspaper. If I go back a bit earlier it says,
it actually starts off with ... I will read it to you; it is not very long:

"WE ARE all being asked for our views over the future of secondary and tertiary education in Guernsey. The review is certainly needed, but the timing could hardly have been much worse. The final proposals are due to be debated by the States in March [2016]. In other words, at the final meeting of the current Assembly. Why is that such a bad thing? I think there are several reasons. My first concern reflects my cynicism over what motivates some, but by no means all, of our deputies. I suspect that come March the main focus for many of those seeking re-election will be which stance will lose them the fewest votes. I deliberately put it that way round rather than saying 'which stance is likely to gain them most votes' for a good reason. My experience tells me that on highly emotive issues such as this one the number of people saying..."¹

490 **The Chairman:** While I am delighted that you give so much credence to things that I write in *The Press*, I wonder if you could answer the question!

495 **Deputy Le Pelley:** The point is that even then, Deputy Roffey, you said that you thought – and you were then an ex-Deputy of some years of experience, who had been writing for *The Press* for some time, still quite a wide-awake pundit, and now back in the States' – you said at that time that you thought that it would take up to one or two years for a Committee to get its feet under the table and to work its way through what was going on.

Mr Digard: Yes. I think I can understand that, but in terms of where we are today –

500 **Deputy Le Pelley:** We are talking about six months.

505 **Mr Digard:** – this is simply asking the States' to ratify the earlier decision. Very sensible, in my view. So why has it taken seven months to come back to ask them, to say are you sure that the new Assembly wants us to carry on down this track? It is a lot of time to spend, is it not?

510 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Not really, because what we have done is, we have set ourselves up in May as a new Committee. The Committee elections of Presidents were on 11th May, the Committee itself was actually formed on 18th May, and we had our first meeting in the last week of May. So we have had June and July. We had August off with either members of the Department, or members of the Committee out of the way, and then we have had September. So we are talking about three months, three and half months. We have, as a Committee, been two people who have been in the States before, and three people who are brand new. When I selected my Committee I did not ... If I had wanted to go where you are suggesting we should have gone straight away, I would have selected four fellow Members who thought my particular way – that I wanted to have selection at 11, and I wanted four schools, and anybody who did not agree with that would not have been on my board – and then I would have pushed very hard to have the debate reopened, and that would have been a knee-jerk reaction. Something which you were suggesting should not happen, because it is likely to be just the people who have not had their way before coming back and saying, 'Well, we will try and overturn this.'

520 We have tried very hard to allow some stability to come in, to actually give people time to reflect and to think, for the 18 new Deputies to actually...

525 **Mr Digard:** Sorry, it is really the effort that has gone into reaching the new policy letter today. Because you seem to be indicating that you could have gone ahead, and either not followed the States' Resolution, or implemented the States' Resolution. I am just intrigued to know what thought process on the Committee there was, that said it has taken us from the election to now to ask for a fresh mandate, when there was already that existing Resolution that said, 'Would you please move to three schools and get rid of the 11 Plus.'

¹ Guernsey Press, 1 October 2015, Roffey Writes - Late for the bell

530 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Can I finish off where I was, because I am getting to where you are coming from?

Mr Digard: Okay.

535 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I chose my four people who came from ... deliberately so. I chose people who were male and female, old and young, people who had some experience, and some who had no experience, and I deliberately chose people who had different backgrounds, so educational backgrounds, so there is someone there who has had a private education and nothing else, somebody else had a secondary school education and then transferred to The Grammar School. I
540 did the Grammar School only; other people who did secondary school and then transferred to the Sixth Form. So there is wide range there.

I also chose people, because we are in three different areas – we have got Education, Sport and Culture – I have chosen people who would represent a view on culture, on the Guernsey language, and on people who were sporty, people who had knowledge of disability issues, so to actually
545 cover us as wide as we possibly could.

Now, we have also had to take part in ... well, it is two boards moulded into one, so the work load is quite high. The input that we have had to do to actually understand everything that our mandate covers has taken some time to actually get our heads around. So we did not go rushing in to this. When I was elected, and when I went on to the radio, the very first time in May, I said
550 that I had taken advice from other senior Deputies, from officers, and from Law Officers, as to when was the sensible and suitable time to actually get this debate sorted, so that people have a chance to be absolutely *au fait* with everything about them, rather than just running headlong into something that could actually go wrong. And that is exactly what we said, we said we hoped to do it by November.

If the States approve the policy letter, when they come to debate when it should be debated, it will be dated on 30th November, and that is what we said. So, I do not see why anybody thinks we have taken so long. We had the Chairman of this particular Committee suggesting that one to two years would be a reasonable time for people to actually get their heads around it. We have taken six months to actually get it to where we are. But we have been doing a heck of a lot of work in
560 the meantime. We have looked at the three school plan, we have looked at the model, we have looked at four school models, we have looked at whether there should or should not be selection. We have had very, very robust meetings to discuss exactly where we wanted to go. At the end of the day having got ourselves firmly sure of where we each individually stand, we decided the time was right for this to be re-debated.

565 **The Chairman:** In your statement to the States in' September, when you said there were now three members of your Committee in favour of the extant Resolutions, you made no mention of coming back in November for a fresh debate on the previous March Resolutions. Rather you said you would be coming back the following July with proposals that complied with the extant Resolutions. Two days later you had completely changed you mind.

What caused that epiphany moment?

570 **Deputy Le Pelley:** That is not necessarily true. Just because I had not said something in the States, does not mean that had not been what I intended to do. There was always an intention, and the board always intended, that there would be a debate in November.

On 21st September, when we made that particular statement it was because there had been a board meeting on the day before when various people on the board had made it known that they were more interested in further investigating the three school model. As we have sort of argued it backwards and forwards, and gone round and round looking at all the pros and the cons, we
580 actually feel that there should be a four school model. But the actual view was that there should

be more investigation into the three school model to see how it would work, and what would be right and wrong with it.

585 When I was actually asked – I believe it was you that asked me – if I would consider my position, because it appeared that I now had three people against me, we actually had two people who wanted selection at 11, but the other three, who did not concur with that, did not necessarily have exactly the same model in opposition. So, it was really more two, one, one, one, rather than two, three.

590 **The Chairman:** You have mentioned all of the work that you have done over the last few months. Why aren't you, having done all that work, and looked in detail at all of the options the way the rest of the States' Members have not, why haven't you come up with a firm recommendation about which way the States' should go in November?

595 **Deputy Le Pelley:** We have looked at it, those five people with our officers. We have argued the possibilities, we have talked to various people who are in the education business, to see what they think, but we have not actually come up with any firm proposals, or anything that we have sent our staff away to actually draw up in fine line, because what we have come down to, at the end of the day, is that we think that there is a need to decide whether there should be selection at 11, yes or no, first and foremost. That is the debate that we want to have in the States' Chamber
600 on 30th November, possibly into 1st December. Once that is resolved, then we can move on to look at the actual three or four school model.

It gets all complicated if you start taking the two together, which is why we ended up with the amendments from the old T&R Minister, which ended up with us having a three school model, rather than a four school model. The previous board wanted non-selection, it wanted four schools,
605 and it wanted a federation, if you like, with a head sitting over the four secondary schools, the four high schools. And that is something that we wanted to investigate and to look at, and we decided that that was not really the way we wanted to go.

610 **The Chairman:** If the States' vote for selection, what is your preferred method of selection?

Deputy Le Pelley: My preferred method?

The Chairman: Well, your Committee's preferred selection method.

615 **Deputy Le Pelley:** The preferred method of selection by the board is not to have selection. That is the preferred.

620 **The Chairman:** If the States' vote for selection, what is the preferred method that they would use in those circumstances?

Deputy Le Pelley: That is to be ratified, but I think the thinking there at the moment would probably be some extra papers on what exists at the present time. But that has not been ratified by the board. Well, there are two of us that favour it –

625 **The Chairman:** – option two then is to vote for a selective system, but you do not know what type of selection that would be.

Deputy Le Pelley: That is not what I said.

630 I said we have not decided what the selection process would be, but two of us know what we want, the other three have not given a view yet, because they are still of the mind that there should be non-selection. *(Interjections)*

635 **Deputy Queripel:** I take it from your last two or three answers, Deputy Le Pelley, that it was not your Committee's priority to either implement or not implement the Resolutions, but to acquaint yourselves with your mandate, which is understandable to some extent, but don't you agree that that has caused some uncertainty and angst, to some extent, amongst the public, and the teachers, and the children? And would it not have been better to come back earlier, to help to nullify that?

640 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, the angst would be if we went to December 2017, and then found that having done what the extant Resolution told us to do, which was to come back with a non-selective system, with three schools and we actually paid 18 months of time, money, effort and everything else to get to December 2017, and then find that 25 people who had voted for that extant Resolution in March 2016, who are now no longer part of the States – they have either resigned their posts or have been de-selected, if you like, or lost their seats at the Election – and
645 18 new people have stepped on board ... We could find ourselves in December 2017 making our proposals, and people saying, 'Well, sorry, we were never consulted, and we do not actually approve of the way you have gone. So, thank you very much for all the hard work and for the 18 months that you have gone down the road, but we are not happy with what you have done.'

650 So we felt that the best thing to do was to get a grip of everything, understand it as best we can, and to come back, as we said, right at the beginning, that the earliest we could do that would be in November. In November is when it is going to happen, and we have come up with the opportunity for the 18 new people to actually give their view, give us a direction.

655 I can tell you this, that we as a group are quite happy to work whichever direction, whichever way, the States of Deliberation direct us to go. There are no nasty splits. There are far, far more agreements than there are disagreements around the table, and we do work well as a team, and we are happy to progress anything that the States decides for us, and we do not want any more flipping and flopping from back to this to that to the other.

660 I think that you in your article were saying that disgruntled people could very well try and derail things, the next decision, and if we end up with 20:20 or 21:19 as the vote, there is always that possibility that we could actually go down that road. This particular Committee, and if that means that I have to change my vote to actually make sure that it does not get derailed, I will do that. If the decision of the States is that we are going this way or that way and that is the decision, this board will deliver that.

665 **The Chairman:** I am delighted I have got such an avid reader. *(Laughter)*

670 Can you comment on, from the outside it seems a bit odd that, when the majority of your Committee favoured selection, which was at odds with the existing States' policy, you did not feel the need to come back to the States', but it seems as soon as it went the other way, you did feel the need to come back to the States'.

Deputy Le Pelley: There was always a desire to come back to the States. We knew right from the word go that with 25 votes, and I think there were 20 of those 25 had been in favour of non-selection, and it had been such a major debating point in the hustings, and on the canvassing for votes during the Election, it was obvious that this was going to be something that was going to come back. When we then had the elections in the States for the Presidency of the Education,

Sport & Culture – both of you were there – you should remember two possibly three times, I said, 'This is what I am proposing. If you do not agree with this, please do not vote for me' –

680 **The Chairman:** I seem to recall you proposed continuous assessment as a method of selection.

685 **Deputy Le Pelley:** No. What I said is I proposed a form of selection that was less stressful, and that one of those options could be a form of continuous assessment. It was not continuous assessment and nothing else. You have to think back a little bit further to the actual March debate, which was when Deputy Trott moved an amendment, and I seconded it, suggesting that perhaps continuous assessment might be the method to actually select children at 11, which would be less contentious and less difficult, for youngsters at age 11, a process for them to go through. That is not quite necessarily what I actually said when I was standing for the election.

690 **The Chairman:** So, the favoured method now is the 11 Plus but with extra exams added in. Is that the less stressful method that you are ... ?

695 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, the 11 Plus system as it used to stand was seven papers, and there has been some criticism that in cutting it down to two, non-verbal and verbal, they are not giving you enough evidence to make a proper decision on, and there are people who feel that perhaps more basic maths and English testing might give you a better base to make those decisions on. There are others, of course, as I am sure you will quickly tell me, that think that all four of them are no good at all, and that there should not be any selection whatsoever.

700 It is something that needs to be debated in the States. That is why we are bringing it back.

The Chairman: The 11 Plus was not supported by a majority of consultees in the big public exercise that the previous Education Committee put out, was it?

705 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I think it was, actually.

The Chairman: I thought that selection was, but 11 Plus was a minority.

710 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Ah, I beg your pardon. Selection definitely was. I cannot remember the exact figures, but there were youngsters in Year 6 that said that they favoured selection at 11. I think there were 18% of them that wanted a different type of paper. They did not like the actual 11 Plus paper as it stood. I think it was 40%, was it, that were happy with things as they were? That is from the Year 6 people that were doing it.

715 There was a difference of opinion with the number of people who replied, members of the public. I think that was something in the region of 61% were in favour of selection of some sort.

The only group that were in favour of non-selection were the teachers.

The Chairman: I was asking about the 11 Plus rather than selection. It was a minority that favoured the 11 Plus, wasn't it?

720 **Deputy Le Pelley:** The 11 Plus as it then existed. Yes.

The Chairman: Sorry.

725 **Deputy Le Pelley:** The 11 Plus as it then existed.

The Chairman: Why put the timetable back by another two years, if the States' do choose to go down the non-selective system?

730 **Mr Digard:** Especially, since you had all that work in the last seven months to get to this point?

Deputy Le Pelley: It comes down to, well, two things really. The first one is how quickly if we do decide ... This is if we decide to rebuild La Mare de Carteret. It is really a matter of how quickly can we get a spade in the ground to actually start the building, when will that building actually be ready, and fit for purpose, for the children to be in it?

735 The other thing, of course, is that if we are going to be moving people around do we really want to have two sets of moving children? So we would rather have everything happen in one go, rather than...

740 **The Chairman:** Why can't you do a non-selective system inside the current estate? Why do we have to wait for La Mare to be rebuilt?

Deputy Le Pelley: If La Mare is rebuilt, that is what we would like to do.

745 **The Chairman:** I was asking why, really.

Deputy Le Pelley: Why? We feel very strongly that the Island does not want to have two schools of 960 to 1,000 students in them. So we would prefer to have a four school option of 600 students.

750 **The Chairman:** I was not talking about three or four school option. I was saying if the States' choose a non-selective system, why do we have to wait for the La Mare project to be complete before that happens?

Deputy Le Pelley: I think it revolves around having to change the catchment areas.

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The Chairman: Do you want to expand on that?

760 **Mr Brown:** The view is that there would need to be both the current capacity of La Mare and the future capacity of La Mare. There would then be two lots of catchment changes to try and work with the best primary feeder system into secondary. So that is the reason.

Mr Digard: So, if I am reading that right, you could actually introduce the new system sooner, but you are actually saying, look, it would be a bit clunky to do so.

765 **Mr Brown:** It would involve two significant changes of catchment –

Mr Digard: It could be done, but your advice would be not to do that.

770 **Deputy Le Pelley:** We think it would be disruptive, and traumatic for some children, especially if they have got siblings in the same school. There could be problems with simply not being enough ...

775 **Mr Digard:** Thank you, I just wanted to clarify that. Sticking with schools, if I may please. Have you taken a decision on which secondary school will close if the States' sticks to its current decision?

Deputy Le Pelley: We have not.

Mr Digard: Any idea when you might?

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Deputy Le Pelley: I think we will look at the decision made on selection before we get into that. We have said right from the beginning of this hearing here that we want to have the debate on selection at 11 first. When that is decided, then we will decide on how many schools we need. We think it is a separate discussion.

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The Chairman: You say it is separate, and yet in your policy letter, you say, if the States go for a selective system, then the three school option is not an option at all, because it will be too unfair and too divisive. So the two are clearly connected.

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Deputy Le Pelley: There is a connection there, but we need to have the selection debate first, and to decide which way this Island is going to go, whether it is going to go selection or non-selection. I accept what you are saying that there is a link between the number of schools, but I do not think it has to be the main thrust of the debate. We do need to resolve, first and foremost, exactly whether this Island wants to go down the selection at 11 route, or the non-selection at 11 route.

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Deputy Queripel: Can I just ask if it is a non-selection approach, and it will be with three schools, could it be perhaps inferred that there will be no need then to rebuild the La Mare de Carteret High School? I am not talking about the infant school, or the primary school, but perhaps the high school, because then you would have the Grammar School, Les Beaucamps and St Sampson's. Would that not be an option that you could look at and then, of course, still have the three schools, but you would cut down on the cost of rebuilding the entire La Mare de Carteret Schools complex?

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Deputy Le Pelley: That is an option, but it would result in having two schools of nigh on 1,000 children in each. The trouble with Beaucamps is that it cannot take more than 660 maximum, which then means with the size of the cohort, that the other two schools would have to take just shy of 1,000. I really do not believe, and this is just ... We need to go and test it, but I do not believe – certainly not in my district, which is the district of St Sampson's; yours is the Vale and I would suspect that your district is much of the same mind – that they would not want to have 1,000 children at St Sampson's High School with the number of children there, the actual lay out of the school, which is a long thin building with a very long corridor, and all the disruption, that the bussing and everything else would incur.

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Deputy Queripel: If it does go to non-selection and three schools, will that be an option that your Committee brings to the States? That you do not rebuild the secondary part of La Mare de Carteret School and use another option?

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Deputy Le Pelley: If it is decided, that will have to be looked at, and we would obviously have to present to the States various options for them to choose. It will be a States' decision at the end of the day. All of this stuff has to be a States' decision. We will be looking at the other 33 Deputies and two Alderney Representatives to help us come to the final decision.

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But again, whichever way the States go, whether it is three schools, or four schools, selection or non-selection, this board is happy, and determined, to actually deliver whatever the States asks us to deliver. We, as a group, have said that we will operate to bring into being the wishes of the States.

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The Chairman: How much would it save the taxpayer if you operated three secondary schools rather than four?

Deputy Le Pelley: That I am going to defer to my experts.

835 **Mr Buckland:** We would have to look at pupil teacher ratios, but it could be – these are ball-park figures and obviously we would have to look at them in more detail – I would say around £1 million. I am looking for my colleague –

840 **Mr Brown:** It is being worked up in more detail, but there are variables within that as Jon said. Where do you go with pupil-teacher ratios, what management structure do you have in place in the different schools? There are lots of different variables that may be taken into account.

845 **Mrs Morris:** Talking about variables, and in the last few minutes we have mentioned capacity a little, and I was just wondering whether any audit has been done on the statistics that are driving that? There is a huge reliance on the capacity graph for us to get this right. So are we just taking it as given that that capacity graph is right, or has any third party checked those figures?

850 **Mr Buckland:** I think the original projections were looked at by the Nicholls Review, which was 2014 or 2015, I think, and they are under constant scrutiny, and we do do some sensitivity analysis in that in terms of capacity. But typically, schools will operate with a 10% capacity, to allow flexibility within the operations on a day-to-day basis, but we are reviewing those projections with rigour.

855 **The Chairman:** Those projections show a peak and then a reduction in the number of pupils. Having been brought up at a Grammar School with lots of draughty old huts, I almost hate to mention this, but is there not some possibility that you could save the taxpayer money by the use of modern temporary classrooms for a limited period of time just to see yourself over that peak?

860 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I must say that, and I am a teacher of a few years back, my best ever results were done in a draughty Portakabin. You need to get the children really working very, very hard with you, and a good teacher or a good teacher-pupil relationship is what will drive this forward, rather than the building. But it is no fun teaching in a Portakabin. The temperature can be vastly changeable, you can have condensation, you can have leaks. It is not the most pleasant of places, either for a pupil or as a teacher.

865 Yes, you are right, I think the numbers peak around 2026. They then hold for a few years, and then they drop. But then we are talking about years that are some way down the line. Who knows what is going to happen with regard to economic development? We may have a change in the licensing system which allows people to come to the Island. We may be actually trying to increase the population on the Island, to enable people of working age to come over here to pay taxes to look after you and me in our old age. Sorry, I am a bit older than you! But that dynamic may change and we may very well encourage people over here who have younger families, and there may need to be more school places.

870 Trying to work out 2034 is a long way ahead and we do not know what the population is going to be doing then.

875 **The Chairman:** You mentioned earlier that Beaucamps was not really capable of expansion. Are you absolutely sure of that, because we keep hearing rumours of options for expanding Beaucamps, but of course, you are the ones that really know?

880 **Deputy Le Pelley:** As I understand it the configuration of Les Beaucamps, on the site where it is, means that it cannot be extended, and if you did you would have to be doing a compulsory purchase of land across a roadway. So to all intents and purposes it would be very, very difficult to do. I suppose you could always go up, and make another floor. I do not think that that would get planning permission.

The advice that we have had is that Beaucamps will have a maximum number of 660 students.

885 **The Chairman:** Mr Digard.

Mr Digard: Thank you.

890 Slight change of tack, but in your report there is reference made to identifying the most able, gifted and talented children, and the desired outcomes for them. I was just wondering if you could talk us through how you will do that, and what will happen to those who are so earmarked, so to speak?

895 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, let's just say that special needs is both ends of the spectrum, so we have youngsters that are going to have difficulty learning, and we also have youngsters who are above the scale, really. People that actually outperform what the levels are for the normal cohort. We are asked by the States to come back to the States in December 2017 with a report. That report is work in progress, and we have not progressed it very far at the moment. So I am afraid you are going to have to wait for that, but it is work in progress.

Mr Digard: Okay.

900 Similarly, if I have got the numbers right, you are currently sending around 200 pupils a year to the colleges – ballpark figure, I think that is right. If you continue to send them under whatever system comes, particularly if it is non-selection, what criteria will be used?

905 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Sorry, you are talking about ... There are 52 children per annum that go to the colleges, six go to Blanchelande, and 23 each go to Elizabeth College and Ladies' College.

Mr Digard: Sorry, it is the special place holders ... The 200 I think is the total.

910 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, there would be more than that over five years. They are there for Year 7 up to year –

The Chairman: I think I can account for the confusion, I think you are quoting their total intake per year, but the special place holders are as Deputy Le Pelley said.

915 **Mr Digard:** But my point remains really: of those special place holders, under the new system, how will they be selected?

920 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, that is going to depend on what happens in 2019. The funding changes in 2019. That is the first thing. The second thing is it would depend on, if we go down the comprehensive line, whether in fact those places would be required or not.

925 **The Chairman:** Yet, you are going to have those debates totally separate. You are not going to have a discussion until the end of next year about college funding in the States? Surely it is part of the bigger picture?

Deputy Le Pelley: Well, yes, we are also going to be talking to the colleges in advance of that, but of course, that is going to be something we will be doing with them, not in the public eye. It

will be sensitive details that we will be discussing through their commercial programmes etc. So we anticipate talking to them sooner, rather than later, to see what we can come round to.

930 But of course, one of the models - and I have to say one of the models, because we have not discussed it, we have not decided it - but if we were to go down the fully comprehensive route, it may well be that the States would tell us that that would mean that the special place holders would no longer need to be found a place, because if the system is there which gives comprehensive education to all, then it is for all. So those people who would normally be special
935 place holders would be expected to go to the comprehensive system, and those who wanted to go to the private sector - it may be the same people, I don't know - it would be depending on whether their parents wanted to pay for them.

The Chairman: That decision to be taken at the end of next year would surely impact on the
940 decision to be taken in the middle of next year on three or four schools. So haven't you got it the wrong way round then?

Deputy Le Pelley: We are investigating it, and we are talking to the interested parties, so it is
945 work in progress.

Mr Digard: Thank you.

One of your Committee members stated publicly, earlier, that you were considering changing the length of the school day quite radically, and I see from the report today that that is actually also a work in progress. I am wondering, is that the best way of announcing significant policy
950 shifts, to come up on a Facebook blog?

Deputy Le Pelley: Probably not, but then what we are doing is we are welcoming any, and every, suggestion that anybody in the community wants to make. If anybody has got any bright ideas, any suggestions, we are happy to receive them. We will discuss them, debate them, we will
955 investigate them, we will, if we can, test them against the market, see if they work or not. There are some areas in Scotland that have that system, and it works for them. Whether it would work for us, or not, I do not know. Whether things should have been put on a blog or not, I do not know. I have not told anybody they should or they should not put things on blogs.

The Chairman: It is in your policy letter today.
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Deputy Le Pelley: No, no. (*Interjections*) The question referred, I think to one of my members -

The Chairman: Initially, that was -
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Deputy Le Pelley: - putting something on a blog some time ago.

But we are quite happy to investigate all of these things. If it is going to enable us to raise the standards in Guernsey schools, to get youngsters attending more regularly, and coming in to school more wide awake, more willing to learn, whether that means that we have breakfast clubs,
970 where we can guarantee that youngsters come to school and start their learning on a full stomach, and with the right kind of foods.

I am not sure if you are aware, but I am told there are up to 400 youngsters a day taking food from food depots and things, that are in that kind of social need in Guernsey. If someone is coming to school on a Mars Bar and a high calorised fizzy drink, that is not the best kind of diet.
975 We were talking about the healthy options before. That is not the best healthy option, it is also not the best thing for them to come to school to learn on.

We would also like to encourage people to do more in their lunch hours, to actually have more focused activities. We would also like to see them, where possible, staying on after school for

980 homework clubs, or various activities. Either for health, healthy activities, or to perhaps help them with their homework.

When I was teaching I had a number of youngsters there that I knew could not produce their homework. When they were getting home of an evening, they might be getting home to a disruptive family, family there where people might have been working shifts, where mum might not have been getting home until an hour and a bit, two hours after them, where they were perhaps not being fed properly, where there were perhaps four, five or six siblings within the property which prevented them from doing any adequate homework. So, giving these youngsters a chance to actually focus and do that at school, with some kind of organised club can only be a good thing.

990 **Mr Digard:** I think we are all shocked by that 400 figure.

Deputy Le Pelley: I believe that was the figure that was given out at the Cotils about a year ago.

995 **The Chairman:** I think we take a five or 10 minute recess, and we will resume at 3.15 p.m.

*The Committee adjourned at 3.00 p.m.
and resumed its sitting at 3.15 p.m.*

1000 **The Chairman:** We are just going to do a little bit more on secondary education. I will try and ask the questions briefly. If you could answer them briefly that would be great. We can then move on to the rest of your mandate.

This is obviously a huge decision you are asking the States' to make next month. How many public meetings are you planning?

1005 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I am not planning any public meetings, personally. I believe that there probably will be some, because I have heard that one or two Deputies are hoping to have some. It may be that the board decide to have one, but I, personally, have not actually proposed one yet, at this point in time.

1010 Lots of the views have already been expressed. We have had a public consultation, less than a year ago. I think we have got plenty of data in there to actually know where people stand with it. If we do a presentation to States' Members, there is no problem with that at all, but we have not at the moment agreed to have a public meeting.

The Chairman: Don't you think that would be a good idea?

1015 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, as I say, I know there are some Deputies are planning that, and I will work out whether it is in our interest to have our own, or to actually work with them.

1020 **The Chairman:** You were very critical that the timing of the last debate meant that it would become an Election issue. You are now suggesting bringing in a non-selective system if that is what the States decide, 18 months after the next Election, 15 months after the next Election, aren't you doing exactly the same thing?

1025 **Deputy Le Pelley:** No, I think what we are hoping to have done by the end of this year is a decision made on whether we are going to have selection or non-selection. By the end of June 2017, we will have a decision whether we are going to have three or four schools. Once that is done we are tied into it as far as I am concerned, and we will be delivering whichever of those two options the States decides to do.

1030 It may be that the school is not actually open, I cannot pre-determine what future Members of the States will do, but I would hope that everybody would buy into whatever the decisions are and we go with it.

The Chairman: I am sure the last Committee hoped that too, but the fact is that the implementation will be after the next Election, so you are inviting it to be an election issue again.

1035 **Deputy Le Pelley:** It is a risk that one has to take, but these things take longer. Unless we go and change the Constitution and have a 10 year term of office, I do not see how we are going to do it.

1040 **The Chairman:** A lot of people have said they want certainty. This approach of debating next month whether to have selection or not, six months, eight months later how many schools to have, six months after that what to do about college funding. You still do not know what form the selection will take. When are we going to have this all nailed down?

1045 **Deputy Le Pelley:** College funding we would like to present in June 2017 as well. We are running to the point, as you say, quite rightly, that we could end up sort of going half way through this term of office even further down and closer to the next General Election. I think, certainly, this particular board has realised that we do not want to be too close to a General Election when these things are coming on line. We would like to have it all sorted by June 2017, or as soon thereafter as possible, so that we have got three and a bit years or so to actually get it done.

1055 **Deputy Queripel:** Talking again about the work of the previous Education Committee, and the ideas they put forward. One of the ideas they put forward was, going back to assessment again, was an inclusive assessment process at age 13 or 14 for the students, including the student, the teachers, the parents. Is that still in the minds of this particular Education Committee? And if we went down that road – so you would decide basically if a child was going down a more academic route or a more vocational route – could the Grammar School not play a part then in the more academic route in regard to post-13 or post-14 education as well as post-16 education as well.

1060 **Deputy Le Pelley:** It is an area that we have looked at as a Committee.

When I did my teacher training, many, many years ago, I actually was trained in Chichester, which is West Sussex. West Sussex actually ran a first school from four to nine, and then a second school, or middle school, from nine to 13, and then a secondary sector from 14 on to 18. It worked very, very well. In fact, when I came back to Guernsey, I would have been quite happy if that sort of system had been put in Guernsey at that time, because 14 is a very, very good age for people who want to perhaps do more vocational stuff, or who are then sort of committing themselves to GCSE courses, to actually sort of do that as a final four year run, 14 to 18, so they get their GCSEs done and their A-levels, or International Baccalaureate, or whatever. We are still looking at that. I have to say that the board, or the Committee, has looked at 14 as being an age where things could happen, and we would certainly want to be talking with the College of Further Education about what happens at 14.

1075 Yes, we need to get away from this idea that whatever happens at the College of Further Education is not as good as anything else. That is patently not true, and throughout the whole of this debate there have been attitudes about 'this system is better than that system', 'this school is better than that school'. That is not the case. We want to have a system where everybody is pleased to be where they are. That where they are is where they need to be. What they are doing is what is going to give them the best chances for their personal development, for their educational standards that they are going to attain, and also for their life choices going forward.

1080 **The Chairman:** We need to move on to other aspects of your mandate, but I will just ask one final question.

You have said that your Committee is very happy to live with and deliver whatever the States' decide.

1085 You, yourself, have been very identified with saying at election time, your constituents wanted you to fight for a selective education system. Would you be the right man to lead a Committee for a non-selective education system?

Deputy Le Pelley: Because I have put forward an argument in a debate, does that mean that I cannot do something else? I have no problem with it.

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The Chairman: Mrs Morris.

1095 **Mrs Morris:** Actually, following on from what you were just talking about standards, I was wondering, we have talked a lot about future structure of education in the Bailiwick, but not a lot about the standards of education in the schools right now. What is the Committee planning to do about raising the educational standards for our children even more than it is at the moment?

1100 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, I think it is fair to say that this Committee feels that aiming at, and achieving, just slightly above the UK average is nowhere near what we should be doing. We feel that Guernsey is in an ideal situation to produce youngsters with much higher skills, much more rounded skills than they are getting. We would encourage wherever possible, either through continuous professional development and training, that the teachers carry on – they are doing a good job, don't get me wrong – but that they continue to improve their teaching ability, that the youngsters become more engaged in their lessons and their school life, and that together we actually move forward.

1105 The idea that the UK level is satisfactory: when you work out the kind of monies that are being expended on things like defence, and various other sort of Third World donations that are being given – and also the trouble we have got, or the UK has got, in having to deliver subjects to communities of very different multi-national or multi-ethnic groups – we have not got that, so we really ought to be able to have a better spend for our money. We should have more money available, and we should be spending it better. We intend to do that. We would like to raise all of our standards. That is going to mean, where possible, we can actually have better teacher-pupil ratios, that we can have better qualified teachers, that we can have teachers that know they are going to have a certain amount of time on the Island.

1115 It comes down perhaps to the length of Housing Licences. At the present time we have teachers who come over on a Five Year Licence. After three years they are probably looking for their next career move. Is that a good thing? It is costing us a bomb in packages for people to come over here and have their assessments and their interviews and whatever, and then their relocation packages. If people could be given a longer term of tenure over here, there could be savings there, and where the good teachers come over and they are in post and doing a good job, they should be encouraged to stay.

1120 **Mrs Morris:** Are you working with the current Housing Authority at the moment about those issues?

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1130 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, I am speaking as an ex-member of the Housing board, who challenged very strongly the idea that teachers should have Seven Year Licences. It is very restrictive. I know that there was a policy about population control and all the rest of it in place. But I think we are where we are. Our population is the shape and size that it is. We do need to get a bigger working population in order to raise taxes to pay for older people in their long-term elderly care.

1135 We are going to have to do two things. One is we are going to have to get our local youngsters upskilled better and quicker, so that they remain on Island doing the necessary jobs, rather than having to bring other people in to do them. Also, of course, it means that we will have a happier work force, a bigger work force, and then hopefully those standards will be increased.

1140 **Mrs Morris:** Okay. You mentioned recruitment there. Is the Department finding it difficult to recruit at the moment, and is the uncertainty around the future of secondary education impacting on that?

1145 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I think when Mr Mulkerrin, who was the non-States' member of the Education Department, two or three years ago, he actually ... Well, before that, he actually wrote his Mulkerrin Report, both into primary and into secondary sections of education. He made the point that when he was in the UK, and I think he got the OBE for actually turning around failing schools in the London area, that he was able to identify tip-top teachers that he wanted to have on his school teaching group, that he would actually do that almost at the end of the interview and say, 'Yes, you are the person I want, the job is yours'.

1150 Over here, we have a situation where, when a very good candidate comes over, they would have their interview, the head teacher may wish to appoint them there and then. You then have to have this 'hang on for a little while, while we go through all the process of getting you a Housing Licence', and by the time that that Housing Licence has been approved, three other offers have come in and the person has gone – and that is not good for Guernsey.

1155 **Mrs Morris:** Do you actually have statistics on how often that happens?

Deputy Le Pelley: Personally, I have not. I do not know if my officers would have anything to say on that?

1160 **Mr Brown:** There is an analysis of number of applicants, how many withdrew, and we try and get the reasons why.

1165 **Mrs Morris:** Okay. On that same subject, so much earlier, and this afternoon, we were talking about how the management of schools might change. Do you think that if you had that devolved management – like you were saying before, Mulkerrin could literally say at the end of the interview, 'I want you' – do you think that would help?

1170 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I think it would, because I think that a high quality teacher, who is going to be looking for a job reasonably quickly, if they come to Guernsey and they see a school that they really fancy and that they really want to work in, but they are not sure whether they are going to be appointed or not, there is a big sort of question mark hanging over their appointment, and then they have say two or three other schools in the UK offer them jobs, the chances are they are going to be poached away. Why should they be wanting to wait further down the line, because if the other offers are allowed to lapse, then they are going to be going into schools that may not have the same sort of kudos and whatever, and why should they want to run the risk of going into a second-rate or third-rate school in the UK? I think they would be much better grabbed as soon as they possibly can, given the job in Guernsey, and let's have the quality here straight away.

Mrs Morris: Okay.

1180 **The Chairman:** Can I just come in the standards, sorry, before you move too far along? Am I right in paraphrasing you saying that just above the UK average is basically underperforming for Guernsey, because of our advantages?

1185 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I think so. I think Guernsey can do much better.

Mrs Morris: What about Alderney?

1190 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Alderney is a different situation. It is an all-age school. It has very small numbers. It means that each child counts for about 7% or 8%. So you have one or two underperforming students – if you have two underperforming students in Guernsey that counts as ½% each, so that is 1% – in Alderney that would be nearly 15%. So it really distorts the actual results.

1195 Cohorts come and go, there are good cohorts and not so good cohorts, and if you have a group that is struggling, and that are perhaps finding education difficult, and if you have a system where things are a little bit slack, you can actually have slippage.

Now, I think it is fair to say that Alderney ... I am thinking good things for Alderney coming up. I think Alderney has got three or four things that have happened very recently. There is a new head teacher in post; there is a new deputy head teacher in post, both of whom are very highly thought of, with a background I believe in the Falkland Islands, I may be wrong.

1200 **Mr Buckland:** Both correct.

1205 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Both Falkland Islands, who know the island way, know how to engage people who are islanders. There has been the idea of the kids being allowed to go home at lunchtime and then perhaps not drift back. That has been closed, so they are now encouraged to stay at school. I believe also that the cohort coming up is of a higher standard. So next year, better results – might be down to better teaching, might be down to better leadership, but it might just be down to a brighter cohort. But I think Alderney is actually turning a corner. *(Interjection)*

1210 Just to add to that too. The board is going up to Alderney this week. On Thursday of this week, and we will be in a far better position to tell you more about Alderney when we get back.

Just while we are here, if any of you do want to visit any of the schools, you are more than welcome. The head teachers will welcome you with open arms, show you around, explain to you everything that is there, warts and all, to give you a better chance to ask more questions when we have our second meeting with you.

1215 **The Chairman:** Can we ask them their views on selection as well?

Deputy Le Pelley: Of course you can. We have! *(Laughter)*

1220 **The Chairman:** Talking about standards generally. If we are underperforming, then presumably we should not be scared of change. A lot of people have said over the years we must not throw away something that works so well. But you are saying it does not really work so well, given our advantages.

1225 **Deputy Le Pelley:** We are anticipating that it could work even better.

We need to be testing all the time. To become complacent and allow things, and say, 'Well, we have hit it, that is good enough' – it is not good enough for me. When I was teaching, if I ended up with, I don't know, say 10 students getting an A or a B or a C grade in their studies, then next term with the same ability group, I was looking for 12.

1230 **The Chairman:** Should we benchmark ourselves against the most successful countries in the world, do you think?

Deputy Le Pelley: Why not? I would like to think – I am not suggesting –

The Chairman: Should we look at the type of education system they use?

1240 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, perhaps we should. I am not going ... well, two things on that if I may. One thing is I am not going to suggest that we start paying funds to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), because I can think of much better ways of spending that kind of money, than just paying them their fees. But I think that if we were to be comparing ourselves to the top PISA countries, England at the moment is something like 21st, 23rd and 26th in English, maths and science. Well, Guernsey should be way above that. If we are looking to be one of the top countries, yes, I think we should be in the top five.

1245 That is not to say that I am going to suggest that we have the kind of system that they have perhaps in some of the Asian countries, where there is a very high suicide rate as well.

1250 **Mrs Morris.** You said a few minutes ago that to improve educational outcomes we might want to reduce pupil-staff ratios. How are you going to do that when we are on the three-five-five track?

1255 **Deputy Le Pelley:** That is a difficulty that we are going to have to come up against. Whilst in the next two or three years, we are going to be very hard pressed to do those kind of things. But going forward, and as the economy hopefully turns, we are going to have to look at those kind of provisions. We might have to involve more voluntary support, we might have to get more parents involved.

1260 **Deputy Queripel:** Going back to the provision of teachers, correct me if I am wrong, but I believe now we have more ability to train teachers on Island. How is that working out? What benefits has it provided? And can we perhaps put some more incentives in place to help to increase that or improve that situation more?

1265 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, I will start answering that, then I will offer it to Mr Brown, because he may have something more to say.

1270 I think if you have got people who have left school at 16, 18 or so and they have started a family, and are then sort of looking to perhaps look for a career once they have settled down, then the idea of actually leaving a family and going away for three years to do teacher training, or a degree and then a post-graduate certificate afterwards, is quite a big ask. But the idea that someone can actually be at the age of, I don't know, 24, 25 or 26, something like that, with a family, they are given the chance to actually train on Island for two years or so, and then go away and just finish off in a college of further education, or higher education in the UK, it is probably the better way forward, because you will engage a lot more people. But only if you want to –

1275 **Deputy Queripel:** How is that working?

Mr Brown: At the moment we have up to nine places on an annual basis for people to apply for. That is graduates to apply for on-Island, on-the-job teacher training, supported by Brighton University.

1280 So there are quite stringent entrance requirements, it is not an easy option to do it that way, and there is a lot of support has to go in from our schools. We are limited with our number of schools, the number of places we can offer. So later this year, that will go out for the next round, and there will be offers for six secondary places, ideally in shortage subjects, but people have been recruited just because of quality sometimes, even when we do not have the shortage subjects. They have a main placement school, and they do have time in another school, and if they meet the standards then they qualify as a teacher at the end of that year.

1285 It was designed to attract people who were perhaps in another career, who would quite like teaching, so it is a paid placement for that year. But it has also had success in, for example,

learning support assistants who may be teaching in a primary school, who decide they would quite like to teach, so they have gone through foundation degree right through degree to teacher training route.

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So it has had some success, but it is relatively limited in terms of numbers.

Deputy Le Pelley: Some of these people, of course, are coming back into the system with life skills that other people have not got. My biggest fault when I was a young teacher was that I had gone from primary school to secondary school, from secondary school to college, college straight back into teaching. Where were my life skills in that lot? I was just an overgrown school child!

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So, there are many, many different ways that you can sort of get life experiences, and I am sure many of our teachers do exactly that. But for me, personally, I thought that was a gap in my education that I would have liked to, perhaps, have had a gap year or done something else. Not that I would say that you have to do that, but it is not a bad thing to actually have come back in from having been somewhere else doing other things.

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Deputy Queripel: Do you feel it is an initiative that provides value for money and value in other ways? Is it going to be difficult to fund that when you are facing budget cuts?

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Mr Brown: That will be something that the Committee will have to assess, but if you actually put the, I don't know, £20,000-odd investment into someone on Island to train over that year, and you compare that with recruitment costs and, as we said, relocation costs that sort of thing, I think is very good value for money. We have some very good locally qualified teachers, who are highly likely to stay in the system for the duration of their career.

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Deputy Queripel: Thank you.

Mrs Morris: I have got one final question on educational standards. We have talked a lot about secondary education, not so much about over-16, but I was wondering do you have a goal for the percentage you think should be going on to higher education, and if so, how are going to fund it?

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Deputy Le Pelley: One of the things that was put on the table was to try and ... I think one idea was compulsory education to 18, but I do not think we are ... That was something that was thrown on the table. We would not be looking to make education compulsory to 18, but if we could engage young people so that they did stay on to 18, with a guarantee of a job that was commensurate with the qualifications that they got, that would be a good way forward. Not only would it hopefully focus people on to good behaviour, and doing the right sort of things during their early years, but it would also give them a better chance, I think, of full employment on the Island. So we are looking to try and engage these youngsters up to the age of 18.

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If someone at the age of, and this is the Austrian model that I particularly like, we do have and it is nothing new – and I am sure you can remember back to when you were at school, Deputy Queripel –

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Deputy Queripel: A long time ago.

Deputy Le Pelley: A long time ago – there were people who disengaged at the age of 13 or 14, and I know in talking to various career teachers, they say that youngster is ready to leave school but of course, the law will not let them. They have got another two years or three years to run. In my early years the school leaving age was 15, and we had what was called then, in those days, fourth-year leavers. Now fourth-year leavers could be extremely disruptive. The idea really was that, 'The more I mess around the less anybody else is going to do, so it is not going to be

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1340 noticeable that I have not done as much as I should have done', because compared to the others, who might have messed up, they had not done much either.

Mrs Morris: Could we get back to higher education?

1345 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, I am turning to that, if you can engage those youngsters by saying to them, why don't you go to the College of FE or to some kind of placement, whereby from the age of 13 up until 18 they do a five-year apprenticeship scheme, you have then got them doing a qualification, you have got them within the school for some of the time, but you have also got them out and about for the rest of the time. If they are not going to be as well behaved as they should be, you have got the sanction of actually being able to pull them back into the school.

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The Chairman: I think maybe Mrs Morris was thinking about university –

Mrs Morris: I was.

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The Chairman: – when talking about higher education.

Deputy Le Pelley: Sorry.

Mrs Morris: Higher education. So, university –

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Deputy Le Pelley: I beg your pardon, I thought you were talking about College of FE.

Mrs Morris: – rather than keeping people in school.

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Deputy Le Pelley: I though you said College of Further Education, I do beg your pardon.

Mr Buckland: If I could just chip in there. In terms of targets for higher education, I am not sure if there is a target *per se*, but the big challenge for parents and students is affordability. (**Mrs Morris:** Yes.) So we need to look at alternative mechanisms. We would encourage parents and students to consider Europe, where it is appropriate, but also is there scope to do something creatively on-Island as well? And that is something that we have been working on with the other Crown Dependencies as well.

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The Chairman: I think to question to Deputy Le Pelley was funding mechanisms etc., and do you have any targets for what percentage of people should go on to higher education, and how you are actually going to meet that in the present climate? Is that correct, or not quite?

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Deputy Le Pelley: Sorry. What we would like to encourage is, where possible, those youngsters who could study on Island, could actually study on Island. That would engage more people who perhaps came from families where money was not that easy to find.

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My son has just gone off to university, and it is costing me *circa* £25,000 a year for the privilege of him doing that. It is not cheap. I am lucky that I am in a job where I can afford it, but there will be others who will struggle.

If we can have a system whereby, and we are having a very generalised look at the possibility of a university on the Island, even if it is only one sort of school of study at the moment, and perhaps sort of getting bigger over time. Deputy Charles Parkinson is heading up that workgroup. It could possibly lead to us having youngsters studying in the Island and not having to travel away.

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1390 **Mrs Morris:** Do you think that will help their life skills?

1395 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, they may have to do their third year away, or we may have to agree with some kind of off-Island training. I know that my youngster would not have wanted to have been at university in Guernsey; he would have wanted to be in university in the UK. That is absolutely fine, but it may be that the youngsters that go away actually have the funding because the people coming in from outside here to use, if we do go down the university line, if that provides an income, it could actually help subsidise our own students going away.

1400 **The Chairman:** That may or may not happen.

Deputy Le Pelley: No, it may not.

1405 **The Chairman:** As you say a lot of people would like to go off Island and it can be quite healthy to do so. Student loan schemes for instance, have you considered any ... ?

1410 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, student loan schemes, I believe, were looked at in Jersey, and it was going to cost them £80 million. I am not quite sure exactly what it would be in Guernsey, under half of that I would think. We have not got that kind of money to fund it. So the idea of a student loan, it is £9,000, I think, for most university courses per annum. That is £9,000, not including Cambridge or Imperial.

The Chairman: You are ruling that out then, I can tell. What about changes to the grant system?

1415 **Deputy Le Pelley:** In what way?

The Chairman: Have you looked at the grant system at all?

1420 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, we have people that go ... The only bit of grant system that I have been involved in is actually people asking to go for a second degree, where they need an upper second to do that. We fund, I think, something in the region of about 40 or 50 students a year to do that, but there is a minimum standard for them to do that. If we had the money, we would probably allow more. Because we have not got the money, that is why we have the 2:1 so you need a first-class degree or a 2:1 to actually get on that programme.

1425 If you have a 2:2, it is possible to argue extenuating circumstances, but we are strapped for cash, that is a problem. If we had a lot more money, more people would go.

1430 **The Chairman:** I do not want to be accused of being guilty of ignoring the other parts of your mandate, so I am going to come to Deputy Queripel who wants to ask some questions on sport and culture. (*Interjections*)

1435 **Deputy Queripel:** Deputy Le Pelley, could you provide an update on current sport and cultural projects in the Island, specifically during the last six months? So an update on what has been happening in sport and culture.

Deputy Le Pelley: Right, well, first of all, the very big one was the application made by the local Island Games Association to get into the 2021 Island Games. We were very much involved in helping to present that case, that the Island Games should come here. We were also involved in putting through the States the idea that £750,000 sports loan should actually be put in place.

1440 We are very grateful that Dame Mary Perkins is going to be fronting the fund raising for the rest of it. This kind of event does not come very often, we are very lucky. This will be our third Island Games. The first one was in the 1980s, the second one was 2003, and this one now 2021.

There will be fantastic spin-offs, I am sure, for all the youngsters that either get selected, or try to get selected, because that is going to make them fitter and healthier, but we have had the oversight of all those arrangements.

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We are looking at sport and activity strategy. We have been doing that, and we are going to continue that into 2017. We have been working with the Guernsey Football Association and the Football Association on their long-term development plans for Island football, either at Footes Lane, or Victoria Avenue, and it may even include some kind of training facility on one of the corners of Delancey Park, if the conservation ruling does not prevent that. *(Laughter)*

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We are also continuing work with the HSSD, or HSC as it is called these days, in respect of the Healthy Weight Strategy. We do have our Education staff going out to do the weight and the exercise data collection, and to encourage other youngsters to be involved in sport.

We are also involved with the refurbishment of Beau Sejour. I am sure those of you that come in on a regular basis have seen that the fitness areas and the studios have all been revamped. The bar and café have been moved around, so that they are more accessible. Hopefully, they are going to help that 3% increase that we need in the revenue, and we have also got the swimming pool, which as I am sure you are aware was a centimetre or so short because of the actual timing boards. So that has all been sorted out. There was a world record in that pool many years ago when Charles Atkins was a coach. I was a timing marshal and we actually had an over-80s world record. I hope it has still been allowed to stand. But with the new electronic equipment, the pool was just that little bit too short, so we have actually changed that.

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We are also continuing to develop the Life Fit. I have actually, unsuccessfully, tried to get the prescription for the Life Fit. It is something that it is prescribed by a doctor for them to do, and it would be nice if the actual money spent on that Life Fit could actually be paid through Social Security, which would be an income to us, which would help our 3% – but I do not think that is going to happen.

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We have also been involved in a £1 million capital investment bid to refurbish Footes Lane, which will include resurfacing of the track, and the stadium repairs, lighting and parking improvements. That is due anyway, but it would also be very nice to actually have in place for the 2021 Games.

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So, that is the sporting side of it.

Deputy Queripel: Yes, quite a lot to do with sport there, but very light on the arts and culture.

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Deputy Le Pelley: I have not done any of that yet. *(Laughter)*

Well, I used to do a bit of sport, I used to do hockey in my day, but I am more into culture and heritage these days.

We are looking at establishing an effective, and fully sustainable, Guernsey Language Commission. We are getting quite close now to Guernsey French being a dead language. If we do not get it sorted in the next 10 years, I would suggest that it is going to go, and it will be gone forever. So we are trying our best to actually get this Commission. It was started by former Deputy Darren Duquemin, a very good start, but it has started to slip a little bit, and it is now being revamped. We are very grateful to staff like Jo Dowding, at the Museum Service, who is actually organising various events to actually get people doing evening classes and drop-in sessions at midday, and whatever. We have taken part in various minority language meetings. The last one was in Poland – and before anyone jumps in, it was paid for by Poland, so it was no cost to us. But there is also work being done in the Isle of Man to try and save the Manx language, and we are in talks with them, to see if we can actually use any of the lessons learnt by them, in our work.

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I do not know if you are aware, but from 2012 up until 2022, the British-Irish Council are actually doing 10 years of celebrations and commemorations. It actually covers the lead up to the First World War, all of the First World War, and then what happened afterwards. This is my second term being involved in that, but it is looking at the history of Guernsey through the RGLI, the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry, that lost some 1,500 men, or so, in the First World War. So lots of

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1495 events that happened to those soldiers are being re-enacted or remembered or commemorated over the next four year.

The Chairman: I think that is probably quite enough then...

1500 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I have got a lot more to tell you about what we are doing at Castle Cornet!

Deputy Queripel: We still did not touch very much on art, music and performance.

The Chairman: We will happily take a written version of those details in the fullness of time.

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Deputy Queripel: We did not touch very much on art music and performance, and I just wondered do you feel that we make the best use of the Arts Centre? I feel it is underused.

1510 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, the Arts Centre at the present time comes under the Museum Service, but it actually is within the actual Museum footfall. So at the present time to actually get in there you have to pay an entrance fee to the Museum to get into the Green House. What we are trying to do is to reconfigure the actual Arts Centre up there, so that the Green House will actually be outside, you will not have to pay to get in so you will be outside. So it means that there will be more opportunity for people in the art world to actually exhibit their paintings, and also to sell them and obviously, there will be a small commission that will be paid to us, which will help us to get our 3%. But we are trying to encourage as many artistic things as possible.

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We are talking about the cultural side and the buildings and stuff, we do actually maintain over 80 sites on the Island. One of them is Castle Cornet: we do not need to put out a lot of money to refurbish and make sure that place is fit for purpose and safe and everything. We do have Castle nights, which are sponsored, and there are quite a number of activities that happen in there. We have had quite a number of Shakespeare presentations, musical presentations in the Castle – usually free to enter. We anticipate that that will be going from strength to strength in the future.

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Yes, the arts does need to be supported, it is often a quiet and hidden area, because lots of artists just quietly get on with doing what they are doing. I know that you are –

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Deputy Queripel: I am one of them.

Deputy Le Pelley: – and I think you have a sibling who likes to do the odd ode, but we are trying to encourage as much of that as possible.

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Deputy Queripel: Since you mentioned the Island Games, many residents will view Guernsey hosting of the Island Games in 2021 as a positive event, but undoubtedly, there will significant financial costs involved, which may attract criticism. What would you consider the benefits of holding the Island Games to be, and in your opinion, would the benefits from hosting the Games outstrip any financial outlay?

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Deputy Le Pelley: I certainly hope so. I think that if you look at the Olympic Games in London in 2012, or you look at any of the Commonwealth Games that have been going on, the localities have actually had a very, very happy increase in sporting activity associated with them. I think that, if we have got our own superstars performing on the Island, and doing well, which I am sure they will, then it will encourage a lot more youngsters to actually take up a sport. It is healthy living, it actually sort of raises their profile, their abilities, to actually perform. It will encourage a generation behind them, probably, and certainly their children in their turn will be supported by mum or dad having been a successful sports person.

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I am hoping that Economic Development will get the transport system sorted out, and it will be able to get all these people over, and that we will actually have a boost to the economy, because

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1550 when these people come, it is not just them coming; they are bringing their family, their friends. There will be TV rights and all sorts of things going on. We are talking about the possibility of having a triathlon in and around the areas down along the sea front, and you imagine the sort of chances we have got there of advertising Guernsey, with Castle Cornet as a backdrop, all the way from Le Val des Terres along the front there, if Comprop will get their site sorted before 2021. We can actually see that as a very, good sell for Guernsey.

1555 **Deputy Queripel:** I was just going to ask you: the Island Games has been established as an event now for a long, long time, has any work been done in regard to the lasting benefits in other jurisdictions? Can we prove that it has created lasting benefits for other jurisdictions? We have hosted it ourselves, haven't we? So is there any evidence to show that there are long-term lasting benefits of hosting the Island Games?

1560 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I have not looked back at the figures at 2003, but I am happy to do so and report back to you at some future date. I know that Jersey were very pleased with what happened to them when they did the Island Games last year, that they thought it was a boost to them.

1565 **Deputy Queripel:** Have we looked beyond that, though, to the other islands that have hosted the Games over the years? Is it possible to do that, and – ?

1570 **Deputy Le Pelley:** You have to be careful, because one or two islands just have not got the structure, or the sort of framework, to do it. That is why 2021 is coming to us, because one of the other Islands decided that they cannot financially cover it. So there is a risk. We have estimated that risk, we have evaluated it. We are pretty sure that it will be an economic driver for us and they we will benefit.

1575 **The Chairman:** Deputy Queripel, we are coming towards the end of our allotted time so if you could focus on the questions that are most important to you.

1580 **Deputy Queripel:** Over recent years there has been media coverage to indicate sports teams – you have just touched on this – remain unhappy with the travel options between the Islands to and from the UK, and Jersey of course, in respect of availability of seats and willingness by airlines to accommodate last-minute name changes, and price. Do you consider that transport connectivity issues hamper sporting events for Island teams?

1585 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well about a year or so ago, Deputy Queripel, I was sitting where you are sitting now. In fact your chair, actually, Deputy Roffey, I was Vice-Chair when we looked at the various links, the security of air links to Guernsey. One of the main elements that was addressed was sporting activities. We actually had Stuart Falla that came before us to talk about what exactly was required by the sporting community. We do need sponsorship of various teams, things like the Guernsey Football GFC. When they have got half of their games are actually in the UK that is a very, very expensive outlay for anybody to have to go and travel away on a week in, week out basis. It is even worse if you have not got the connections.

1590 When I was doing my inter-insular hockey, we were lucky in that we had, perhaps, six teams that would be playing, and we would actually have three teams play in Jersey and three teams play in Guernsey, and you would actually have enough people to actually do a 50/50 split, so the plane went down to Jersey full, with a team, and it came back with the Jersey players. That way you actually had no dead legs at all.

1595 Now, we perhaps may have to talk to various teams to see if they would be prepared to actually do that, rather than the whole team go down to Jersey in one block, and take up say three Trislanders or whatever to do that, whether there is a regular flight or they charter the plane. But,

of course, it would then come back to Guernsey empty, so that is a loss, so we need to see if we can get the teams to be better co-ordinated.

1600 But we also need to get in touch and be talking to Economic Development to see if they can get flat rates. I think Deputy De Lisle mentioned it on the radio that Economic Development do need to look at standard fares. The idea of booking a year in advance to get a cheap ticket, but then if you are towards the end of the year, and you are looking to make a quick change, or a quick booking, then you are paying almost twice that fee, or you are being absolutely hammered for changing. Supposing someone breaks a leg, or something, and you have to put a substitute into the team, then you are paying a massive fee for changing the air ticket. That needs to be looked at.

1605 We do need to talk with Economic Development. We are lucky in that we have Deputy Dudley-Owen who serves both on Education and on Economic Development that can actually raise that on our behalf. We do need that kind of support.

1610 **Deputy Queripel:** I appreciate that you are going to talk to Economic Development. Do you think your Committee could play a part in engaging more directly with our travel providers, be it by sea or air, to see if you can come to some agreement to alleviate some of the problems that we are facing at the moment?

1615 **Deputy Le Pelley:** We will certainly be talking to those that are left standing, when we know exactly who is going to be delivering what kind of service to where, then we will be asking them to come and talk to us about fares.

1620 **The Chairman:** We are nearly out of time, have you got one last question?

1625 **Deputy Queripel:** I just want to ask in regard to your mandate, clearly, from the last term, it has been greatly increased, embracing the culture and the sport and the leisure side of things. Do you feel that it is a mandate that is manageable for you, or are you experiencing problems? Do you think that it is a touch unmanageable, and if it is, what ways can you find around that to try and get the better of that?

1630 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I do not think it is unmanageable. I think it is a full-time job, and certainly, as a President it is a very, very, full time job. For board members, it depends which other Committee they are on. I would imagine that if you were on another ... well, they are all major Committees, I suppose. But if you were to be on lots and lots of sub-committees, it is very time-consuming. I have tried to take on the bulk of that because I am only on one committee, so because I am on one committee, I have tried to do as much of the culture and leisure side, the heritage side, and my fair share of the school committees, and also one or two of the project boards.

1635 Other people who are, perhaps, on another board have been relieved of some of those duties, and have not got such a heavy workload on the sub-committees. We are required to be on about 50 sub-committees, so it is quite a big ask, but we are up for it.

1640 **The Chairman:** Does it make you question the way of working? 50 sub-committees seems almost undoable, to me.

1645 **Deputy Le Pelley:** Well, no because they are not every week! For example, the school committees, there will be however many schools there are and they will meet once a term. So there will be, in most instances, one of us will have to go and take part in a two-hour meeting, once per term. There are some committees where two of us have to go, but they are manageable. They are of interest, and it is part of our job. We need to know what is going on in our schools, so

1650 when there is a school committee you can actually double up and see exactly what is going on and actually learn from the experience of taking part in that meeting.

1655 But you are right, it is a heavy workload. There is no doubt about it at all. I would imagine it is probably an equally heavy workload on Economic Development, and some of the other Committees as well. When you reduce 10 Committees down to six, and you reduce your 47 Deputies and Alderney Representatives down to 38 Deputies and two Alderney Representatives, you are asking people to work harder.

The Chairman: Talking about work, it is four o'clock.

1660 Before you go, I just want to benchmark whether I have understood exactly where we are on this secondary education bit, as I understood it.

Your Committee is happy, basically, completely to pass over the decision to the States without a firm recommendation either way on selection or non-selection.

1665 **Deputy Le Pelley:** I think you will find, Deputy Roffey, that people on the board will actually be speaking in the debate, telling you the wisdom, or sharing their wisdom with you, and helping you to make your decision. But, at the end of the day the decision will be the States' decision, and we will deliver what you tell us you want.

The Chairman: Fine, I understood that.

1670 No firm decision yet on the system of selection if selection is chosen, but the likely candidate is 11 Plus with extra maths and English exams.

Deputy Le Pelley: If that is the will of the States' to actually have selected education, that at the moment is what two of the board are suggesting.

1675 **The Chairman:** All of this uncertainty will be over by about July next year – college funding, method of selection, if it is selection, number of schools, that will be it, where everybody in Guernsey will know exactly where we are going forward from then?

1680 **Deputy Le Pelley:** That is the timescale that we have set ourselves. We hope to reach it, and I will be disappointed if we do not.

The Chairman: Okay. Thank you very much for attending today. It has been an eye opener in many ways. I thank everybody else for attending, and do come back for Gavin St Pier; the hearing is about this time next month.

1685 Thank you very much indeed.

1690 **Deputy Le Pelley:** As we close can I reiterate the invitation to all of you to actually come and visit the schools. There is a lot of stuff being talked about schools, people saying things, and believing things. Go and experience it for yourself, and please talk to the teachers. They are happy to talk to you, and we are happy for you to go and talk to them.

Thank you.

The Chairman: Thank you very much – session closed. Thank you.

The Committee adjourned at 4.00 p.m.