STATES OF JERSEY

PROPOSED BUDGET 2027-2030 (P.73/2026): FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT

CHILD AND FAMILY SUPPORT AND ENDING CHILD POVERTY

Lodged au Greffe on 24th November 2026
by Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour
Earliest date for debate: 8th December 2026

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSED BUDGET 2027-2030 (P.73/2026): FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (c) –

After the words "Summary Table 3 of the Report" insert the words –

", except that, in Summary Table 3 the Head of Expenditure for Cabinet Office should be reduced by £400,000 and the Head of Expenditure for Children and Families increased by £400,000 to provide funding to the Brighter Futures charity for 2027".

2 PAGE 3, PARAGRAPH (l) –

After the words "Appendix to the accompanying Report" insert the words –

", except that, on page 50 of the Report after the words "Violence Against Women and Girls legislation." there should be inserted the following new paragraph –

"In keeping with the Government's commitment to supporting strong and resilient families, continued support should be provided to Brighter Futures, whose work delivers early intervention and practical assistance to families across Jersey, including those experiencing poverty and hardship. Through the provision of one-to-one support, together with a range of free parenting and wellbeing programmes, the charity helps to build family resilience and improve outcomes for children and parents. This preventative approach reduces demand on statutory services and contributes to lower long-term costs for public services. Accordingly, the Government will establish a minimum three-year funding arrangement to provide greater certainty and sustainability for the charity's services."".

3 PAGE 3, PARAGRAPH (l) –

After the words "Appendix to the accompanying Report" insert the words –

", except that, on page 50 of the Report after the words "Violence Against Women and Girls legislation." there should be inserted the following new paragraph –

"The Government also commits to adopt in full the following 2025 recommendation of the United Nations Committee on Economic and Cultural Rights –

'To expedite the adoption or enhancement of measures, including necessary fiscal reforms and increased budget allocations, to end child poverty, including in Jersey, ensuring that they comply with a child rights-based approach, setting clear targets and timelines, establishing reporting obligations and oversight and participatory mechanisms and providing adequate resources for implementation.'

In committing to this recommendation the Government will develop and publish a comprehensive child poverty reduction strategy, which takes a whole-of-government approach and establishes measurable targets and timeframes for the eradication of child poverty in Jersey."".

DEPUTY L.M.C. DOUBLET OF ST. SAVIOUR

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to receive the Budget 2027 – 2030 specified in Article 9(1) of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 (the Law) and specifically –

(a) to approve the estimate of total States income to be paid into the General Revenue Fund in 2027 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 1 to the Report, which is inclusive of the proposed taxation and impôts duties changes outlined in the Budget, in line with Article 9(2)(a) of the Law;

(b) to approve the estimate of total States income to be paid into the Jersey Capital Investment Fund in 2027 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 2 to the Report, which is inclusive of the proposed taxation and impôts duties changes outlined in the Budget, in line with Article 9(2)(b) of the Law;

(c) to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from the General Revenue Fund for 2027, for each head of expenditure, being gross expenditure less estimated income (if any), in line with Articles 9(2)(c), 10(1) and 10(2) of the Law, and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 3 of the Report, except that, in Summary Table 3 the Head of Expenditure for Cabinet Office should be reduced by £400,000 and the Head of Expenditure for Children and Families increased by £400,000 to provide funding to the Brighter Futures charity for 2027;

(d) to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from the Jersey Capital Investment Fund for 2027, for each head of expenditure, being gross expenditure less estimated income (if any), in line with Articles 9(2)(d), 10(1) and 10(2) of the Law, and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Tables 4 and 5 of the Report;

(e) to approve the transfers from one States fund to another for 2027 of up to and including the amounts set in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 6 in line with Article 9(2)(e) of the Law;

(f) to approve the proposed Changes to Approval for financing/borrowing for 2027, as shown in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 7 to the Report, which may be obtained by the Minister for Treasury and Resources, as and when required, in line with Article 9 (2)(f) of the Law, of up to those revised approval amounts;

(g) to approve for each project that is to be started in 2027 and that has not previously been set out in an approved Budget, the total cost of each

such project, in line with Article 9(2)(g), and (h) of the Law and as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 8 to the Report;

(h) to approve any amendments to the proposed total cost for each project that has previously been approved in a Budget, in line with Article 9(2)(i) of the Law and as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 8 to the Report;

(i) to approve the estimated income, being estimated gross income less expenditure, that each States trading operation will pay into its trading fund in 2027 in line with Article 9(2)(j) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 9 to the Report;

(j) to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from each States trading operation's trading fund for 2027 for each head of expenditure in line with Article 9(2)(k) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 10 to the Report;

(k) to approve the estimated income and expenditure proposals for the Climate Emergency Fund for 2027, in line with the terms of reference for the Fund in Government Plan 2020 - 2023 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 11 to the Report; and

(l) to approve, in accordance with Article 9(1) of the Law, the Budget 2027-2030, as set out in the Appendix to the accompanying Report, except that, on page 50 of the Report after the words "Violence Against Women and Girls legislation." there should be inserted the following new paragraphs –

"In keeping with the Government's commitment to supporting strong and resilient families, continued support should be provided to Brighter Futures, whose work delivers early intervention and practical assistance to families across Jersey, including those experiencing poverty and hardship. Through the provision of one-to-one support, together with a range of free parenting and wellbeing programmes, the charity helps to build family resilience and improve outcomes for children and parents. This preventative approach reduces demand on statutory services and contributes to lower long-term costs for public services. Accordingly, the Government will establish a minimum three-year funding arrangement to provide greater certainty and sustainability for the charity's services."; and

"The Government also commits to adopt in full the following 2025 recommendation of the United Nations Committee on Economic and Cultural Rights –

'To expedite the adoption or enhancement of measures, including necessary fiscal reforms and increased budget allocations, to end child poverty, including in Jersey, ensuring that they comply with a child rights-based approach, setting clear targets and timelines, establishing reporting obligations and oversight and participatory mechanisms and providing adequate resources for implementation.'

In committing to this recommendation the Government will develop and publish a comprehensive child poverty reduction strategy, which takes a whole-of-Government approach and establishes measurable targets and timeframes for the eradication of child poverty in Jersey.”.

REPORT

The 2026 Jersey context

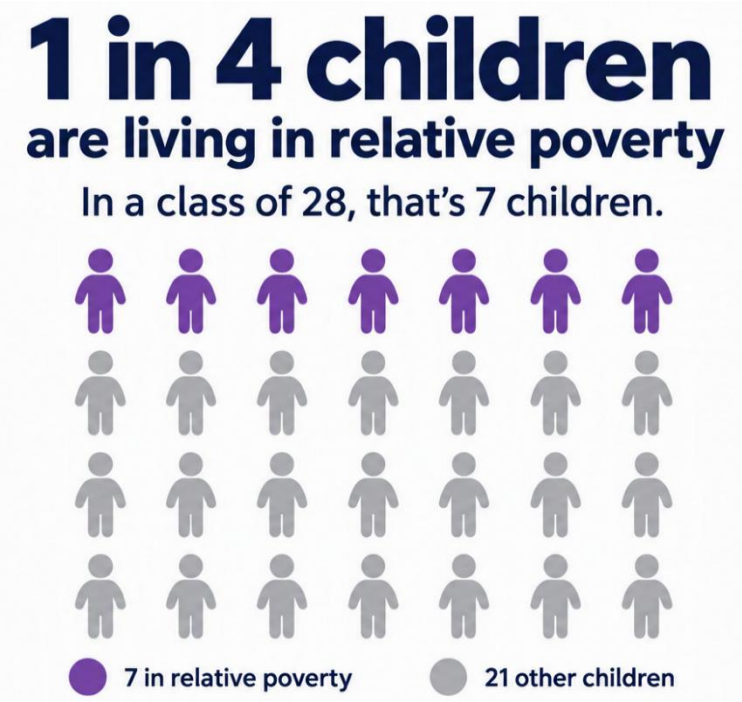
During the recent election I was shocked at the number of families I spoke to who are really struggling. These include families who may have considered themselves part of 'middle Jersey'. It is now widely accepted that Jersey has a cost-of-living crisis, but what many have not accepted is the level of poverty we have on our island.

Definitions of Poverty
For the purpose of this amendment, I acknowledge that absolute poverty is likely to be very rare in Jersey, but relative poverty is unfortunately, not uncommon at all.

> ***Relative Poverty/Relative Low Income****: Earning significantly less than the broader population's average or median income, limiting participation in normal community life*[1].

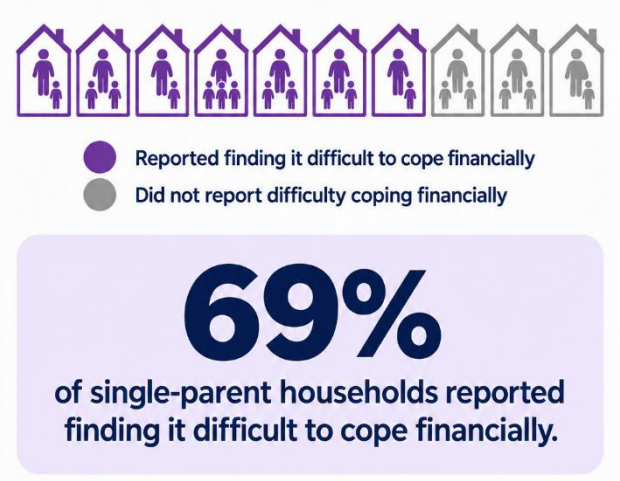
The commonly used threshold of relative low income is 60% of the median equivalised income for a jurisdiction, and this definition is used by Statistics Jersey (Jersey Household Income Distribution, 2021/2022, p. 1).

According to the latest Living Costs and Household Income Survey (2021/2022)[2] the relative low-income threshold in Jersey was £520 per week before housing costs (equivalent to £27,040 annually) and £430 per week after housing costs (equivalent to £22,360 annually). Which means 24% of Jersey households were living in relative low income (RLI) and one in four (24%) children were in RLI (Jersey Household Income Distribution, 2021/2022, p. 1).



[1] https://www.worldvision.ca/en/stories/what-is-poverty-definition-of-poverty
[2] This survey takes place every 5 years.

Single parent households are most likely to find it difficult to cope financially.



(Source: Jersey Opinions & Lifestyle Survey: 2025)

Shortly after the election this year, a coalition of over 13 charities, schools, businesses, and family organisations sent an open letter to States Members warning that many island families are at "breaking point" due to rising living costs and child poverty. The letter—published via Bailiwick Express and covered by the Jersey Evening Post and BBC—followed a May 2026 cross-sector roundtable facilitated by Mentorhood.

I met with members of this group, to hear their views on what needs to be done. There was a huge amount of expertise in the room and passion for making life better for islanders. We discussed various ideas for actions, with the need for a proper, coordinated and sustainable approach to eradicating poverty, seen as absolutely essential, alongside immediate action. It also became clear to me that those working with children, families, pensioners and different types of households experiencing poverty and hardship, mostly through charities, are best placed to act in the short term. Brighter Futures is one of these charities.

What do Brighter Futures do?

Brighter Futures is a Jersey-based charity that supports families experiencing significant challenges and adversity. Since its establishment in 2008, the charity has worked with more than 4,164 families, benefiting over 15,492 Islanders.

The charity's work is centred on an educational model that engages primarily with the main carer within the family unit, providing support, skills, and opportunities that enable families to improve outcomes for themselves and their children. At any one-time, Brighter Futures supports approximately 150 families across a range of programmes and services.

The charity's activities are focused on three principal areas:

- **Parent and child relationships**, helping parents and carers to recognise and strengthen their role as a child's first and most influential educator;
- **Wellbeing and positive mental health**, supporting social and emotional wellbeing, building resilience, and helping families respond more effectively to challenges and adversity; and
- **Personal development and second-chance learning**, providing individuals with opportunities to develop skills and confidence that support progression in education, employment, and wider life outcomes.

Families accessing support from Brighter Futures often present with a combination of complex and interconnected challenges, including physical and mental health difficulties, financial hardship, domestic abuse, social isolation, substance misuse, addiction, and post-natal depression. Many referrals involve high-risk circumstances, including child protection concerns.

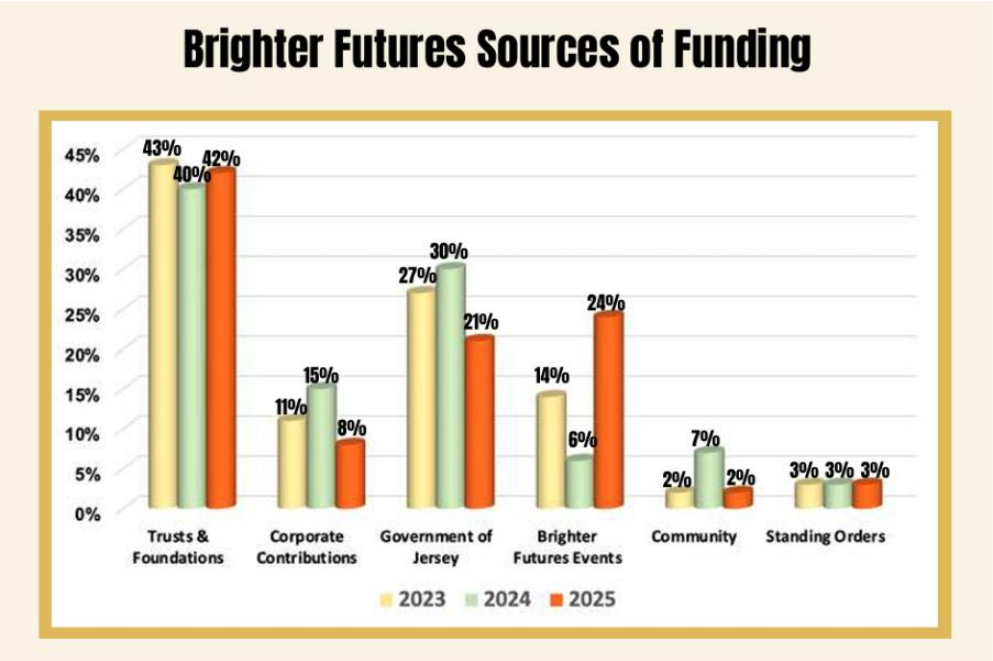
Services are delivered from the charity's facilities at The Bridge and its community hub at Communicare. Families engage with programmes on a voluntary basis and typically receive support over an extended period, averaging approximately three years. Continued support is available where circumstances require.

The challenges experienced by many of the families supported by Brighter Futures can have a significant impact on children's emotional, physical, psychological, and language development. Without appropriate intervention and support, these factors can contribute to poorer outcomes in childhood and later life. The charity's work is therefore aimed at strengthening family resilience, improving parental capacity, and creating safer and more supportive home environments in which children can thrive.

The vision of Brighter Futures is that all families in Jersey should have the opportunity to live safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives, with access to support during periods of challenge so that they may realise their full potential.

How is Brighter Futures funded?

In 2025, the total income of Brighter Futures was £1,392,630.00 (Charities Public Register – Brighter Futures), Government contributed 21% of that funding in 2025, compared with 30% of their total funding in 2024.



(Source - 2025 Annual Impact Report Booklet, p. [13])

Additional Funding Needed

The additional funding of £400,000 sought by this amendment would ensure that Brighter Futures is able to support **50 families in addition** to the 140-160 families they already help (2025 Annual Impact Report Booklet, p.[10]). The work of Brighter Futures reaches beyond the families they directly help to the communities those families live in, the workplaces and schools those family members attend, and even the generations that follow. The charity's 2025 Impact Review reflects the very real monetary impact of their work estimating that in 2024 the total social value created by Brighter Futures was approximately £9.1 million and the total economic value created was approximately £1.9 million. Furthermore, this additional funding will aid Brighter Futures to provide services which support families facing challenges and difficulties thus reducing demand on statutory services and contributing to lower long-term costs for public services.

Government is moving away from providing grants to third sector organisations and towards a commissioning model – this includes Brighter Futures (States Assembly | OQ.73/2026).

This means that the charity is currently facing huge uncertainty as to the future of its funding structure. Of course, it is potentially right that this process be followed through and an appropriate commissioning agreement put in place. But the reality is that this charity is an absolute lifeline for the families they serve, and in the short term whilst this process is carried out, giving a year of secure, adequate grant funding is reasonable and proportionate.

The Children's Rights Impact Assessment for this amendment highlights the wide range of UNCRC articles that Brighter Futures supports, including –

- Best interests of the Child (Art 3) to be a top priority
- Respect for the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents (or where applicable, extended family or community) to guide their child as they grow up (Art 5)
- Responsibilities of both parents in the upbringing and development of their child (Art 18)
- Children must not be separated from their parents against their will unless it is in their best interests (Art 9)
- Protection from violence, abuse or neglect (Art 19)
- Recovery from trauma and reintegration (Art 39) - Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.
- Leisure, play and culture (Art 31) - Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in cultural and artistic activities
- Special protection measures - sexual exploitation (Art 34)
- Special protection measures - drug abuse (Art 33)
- Children belonging to a minority or an indigenous group (Art 30)
- Right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet the child's physical and social needs and support their development (Art 27)

This amendment is a short-term bolstering measure to help a small number of families in greatest need. The next budget needs to address child (and family) poverty in a way

that provides long-lasting relief to those experiencing it, and addresses affordability of food in particular, for those in most difficulty all the way through middle Jersey.

The Need for Multi-Year Funding

"Poverty, whether short-term or long-term, has a profound and detrimental impact on children, significantly affecting their wellbeing and the overall quality of family life. Sadly, this is a growing area within Brighter Futures. Coordinators are seeing the direct impact of this pressure on family functioning. Parents report increased stress, anxiety, and low mood, alongside difficulties managing day-to-day responsibilities. This is affecting parenting capacity and, in turn, children's wellbeing, development, and emotional security.

In our daily experience, poverty in Jersey is now an ongoing issue rather than a short-term crisis."

Fiona Brennan, CEO of Brighter Futures

Part 2 of this amendment seeks a robust funding arrangement for Brighter Futures to span at least 3 years. This would ideally be a 3+2 agreement which is increasingly being seen as good practice. Families tend to stay with the charity for around 3 years and having a multi-year agreement in place would give security to the charity, their staff and the families they support. It would make an enormous difference in enabling planning not just for the coming year but beyond. It would ensure that the charity is appropriately resourced to deliver the level of support needed for each family, depending on their needs.

It is important that we recognise that Brighter Futures is just one charity working in this area.
For example, Caring Cooks is another frontline charity supporting Island families who are struggling to afford the essentials. Through its One Less Worry initiative, it provides freshly cooked meals through its Weekly Meal Service, milk vouchers and Christmas food hampers. Its Spud Truck tackles holiday hunger by serving hot meals during the school holidays, with no referral or sign-up needed. Through its Food or Fuel scheme, Caring Cooks also supports many other local charities by giving them vouchers to pass directly to the families they work with, helping those families put food on the table or pay for electricity.
The Salvation Army works directly with people who are experiencing financial hardship across the island, particularly through The Pantry Store and their Community Cafe. Over the past 12 months, the Pantry Store has supported a total of 529 households, made up of 1106 people including 383 children. Many of these households visit on a weekly basis, and the average family saves up to £2000/year by accessing the Pantry Store. This gives them the financial breathing space to resolve their underlying issues, as we support them with navigating Social Security, restructuring debt repayments, and accessing budgeting support.

Caritas, Milli's, Mind Jersey, Every Child Our Future, Jersey Child Care Trust, Silkworth, Grace Trust and many others, are lifelines for families and islanders who are falling through the cracks of our government support services (this list is not exhaustive). They also need support and we must bear this in mind with any medium- and long-term plans to address poverty. These charities who are providing essential services to families in crisis, and working together to do so, must also be properly funded with multi-year agreements in the next budget.

A Plan to Eradicate Child Poverty in Jersey

The final part of this amendment came about quite late on in the process, highlighted and reinforced by the recent World Children's Day event and the publication of the Children's Commissioners report Less Money, More Stress (the "Report"). The Report "*examined the everyday lived experiences of children and young people aged 5-18 in Jersey. Working with 23 young coresearchers, methods were devised to collect, analyse and report children's experiences and opinions, with a focus on children's rights and money*".

The resulting report amplifies the voices of Jersey children living in relative poverty and is unsettling to read at times. Amongst the investigatory work that was undertaken by the Commissioner's team and the 23 young co-researchers, children from 15 settings across our island took part. The report captures the voices of 136 Jersey children. The report is appended so that members can read it and understand the full picture, in the words of the children themselves.

The Report sets forward four recommendations. For me the first recommendation is the overarching position that will inform the others.

Recommendation 1

The OCCJ recommends that the Government of Jersey adopts, in full, the concluding observation and recommendation made to Jersey in 2025 by the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:

'To expedite the adoption or enhancement of measures, including necessary fiscal reforms and increased budget allocations, to end child poverty, **including in Jersey**, ensuring that they comply with a child rights-based approach, setting clear targets and timelines, establishing reporting obligations and oversight and participatory mechanisms and providing adequate resources for implementation;'[52]

In fulfilling this recommendation of the Committee, the OCCJ has previously recommended to the Government of Jersey that it develops and publishes a comprehensive child poverty reduction strategy, which takes a whole-of-government approach and establishes measurable targets and timeframes for the eradication/reduction of child poverty in Jersey. We restate that recommendation here.

The above is taken from the Report, the text to the right is from the Office of the Children's Commissioner Annual Report 2025.

1. Child Poverty

During 2025, the Commissioner highlighted the scale and impact of child poverty in Jersey and emphasised that Article 27 of the UNCRC places a clear obligation on Government to ensure that every child has an adequate standard of living necessary for their development. In this context, and in line with the ICESCR Committee's recommendations, the OCCJ recommended that the Council of Ministers adopt a strengthened and coordinated response to child poverty, including:

- The development and publication of a comprehensive child poverty reduction strategy, taking a whole of government approach, and setting out clear, measurable targets and timeframes for the reduction and, ultimately, eradication of child poverty in Jersey. The Commissioner emphasised that such a strategy should be grounded in children's rights and informed by children's lived experience, in line with Article 12.
- The systematic collection and publication of data on child poverty on a more regular and disaggregated basis, including data on its scale, characteristics and underlying causes. This included a recommendation for a commitment to regular income distribution analysis and the effective use of administrative data to support policy development, monitoring and accountability.
- The provision of adequate and sustained resourcing to Statistics Jersey, including within the 2026 Government Budget, to enable the commencement of the Living Costs and Household Income Survey in 2027 and to strengthen the development of administrative datasets. The Commissioner emphasised that robust and accessible data is essential to enable Government to assess the impact of policy interventions and to discharge its obligations under Article 4 of the UNCRC.

This amendment seeks the inclusion of the Children's Commissioner's recommendations – a confirmation that we, as an Assembly, take the advice of the United Nations extremely seriously, and that we intend to uphold the lessons learnt from the Care Inquiry to ensure that "the welfare and interests of children are paramount and trump all other considerations". Of course, Government must work to eradicate poverty for Islanders of any age and focus on affordability more generally – but we must not ignore the words of the United Nations and our own independent Children's Commissioner that child poverty must have a distinct focus.

In Conclusion

This amendment has three distinct phases – short-, medium- and long-term. It seeks the immediate action of increased assistance for Brighter Futures, along with a medium term commitment to financial planning and support. Finally it asks for the Assembly to take on board the recommendations of multiple agencies and take action for the long-term benefit of the children and young people of our Island.

Financial and staffing implications

The immediate financial impact of this amendment would be a £400,000 transfer from the head of Expenditure for the Cabinet Office to the Head of Expenditure for Children & Families.

In the long term, multiyear financing should allow for potential cost savings as the process would be less administratively burdensome. In turn it is acknowledged that the development and implementation of a child poverty strategy would have additional costs, however it is anticipated that additional funding if needed could be identified in the Budget 2028-2031.

Children's Rights Impact Assessment

A Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) has been prepared in relation to this proposition and is available to read on the States Assembly website.