STATES OF JERSEY

PROPOSED BUDGET (GOVERNMENT PLAN) 2026 - 2029 (P.70/2025): COMMENTS

Presented to the States on 4th December 2025
by the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Background

The Proposed Budget (Government Plan) 2026 – 2029 [P.70/2025] was lodged on 16th September 2025, ahead of a proposed debate at the States sitting in the week commencing 8th December 2025. The Budget was accompanied by the publication of the Annex (also on 16th September 2025 as R.139/2025), which provided further details about the departmental spending and additional revenue expenditure.

The Panel's approach to scrutinising the Budget

A list of the revenue programmes examined by the Panel can be found here and the Panel's Terms of Reference for the Review were agreed in line with other Scrutiny Panels. Specifically, the Terms of Reference were:

1. To review components of the Proposed Budget 2026-2029 Proposition [P.70/2025] which are relevant to the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel to determine the following:
    a. The impact of the Budget proposals on departmental budgets, savings and staffing levels.
    b. Whether the revenue expenditure growth, capital and other projects are appropriate and likely to have a positive impact on Islanders and Island life.
    c. How the proposed revenue expenditure growth, capital and other projects align with the Common Strategic Policy to deliver on the priorities, and in line with the Departments' Business Plans.
    d. Whether the resources allocated to revenue expenditure growth and capital and other projects are sufficient, ensure value for money and demonstrate the best use of public funds.
2. To assess the impact of the Budget proposals on the States Funds relevant to the Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel including the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund.

The Panel received the following letters from Government Ministers in response to its queries about the content of the Budget:

- Joint letter from The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning and The Minister for Children and Families on 16th October 2025;
- The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs on 17th October 2025;
- The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning on 6th November 2025;
- The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs on 6th November 2025; and
- The Minister for Children and Families on 10th November 2025.

The Panel identified and wrote to external stakeholders as part of the review and received public responses and submissions from the following:

- Office of the Children's Commissioner Jersey;
- Jersey Early Years Association;
- Jersey Cares;
- Royal Jersey Militia Army Cadet Force;

- Jersey Association of Childcare Providers;
- Jersey Police Authority;
- Jersey Fire and Rescue Service Association; and
- Jersey Student Loan Support Group.

The Panel also received a number of confidential submissions to its review.

The Panel also held three public hearings with Ministers as part of its Government Plan Review:

- The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs on 28th October 2025;
- The Minister Education and Lifelong Learning on 28th October 2025; and
- The Minister for Children and Families on 31st October 2025.

The Panel extends its thanks to all those who contributed to its evidence gathering process.

Panel Amendments

The Panel has lodged two amendments to P.70/2025 which relate to:

- Ringfencing £670,700 of Jèrriais funding in CYPES (Amendment No. 20); and
- Increasing the funding to the States of Jersey Police in the sum of £240,000 (Amendment No. 23).

The report accompanying each amendment provides further information and rationale.

Main themes and key findings

For ease of reference, the Panel sets out its comments below in an order that reflects the Proposition and Summary Tables in the published Proposed Budget (Government Plan) 2025-2028 proposition (hereafter, 'the proposed Budget'):

Table 3 – Transfer of monies between States Funds

It was confirmed that there would be a transfer of £1.7 million from the Criminal Offences Confiscation Fund (the 'COCF') to the Consolidated Fund to fund the additional required funding for Dewberry House. The Panel was advised that the transfer would only be made at the point when tenders had been received for the project and it had been confirmed that the remaining further sum required was £1.7 million.[1] The total balance of the COCF was not confirmed.

Table 4 – Major Projects

Through part (b) vii of the proposition the States Assembly is asked to approve costs and changes to 'major projects', which is defined under Article 1 of the Public Finances Law 2019.[2]

[1] Transcript - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 28th October 2025, p.13
[2] Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 (jerseylaw.je) (accessed 26/11/2025)

Mont à l'Abbé Secondary

The budget for the Mont à l'Abbé major project in 2026 is £400,000. The Panel was advised that this funding would be used for feasibility and indicative designs for the new school.

To illustrate the requirement to expand Mont à l'Abbé school, the Panel was provided with the following table to illustrate how the demand at the school had grown since 2016 – 2017:

	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
Primary	46	47	50	56	60	61	62	61	67	68
Secondary	43	49	50	49	53	56	57	67	64	64
Total	**89**	**96**	**100**	**105**	**113**	**117**	**119**	**128**	**131**	**132**

[3]

It was explained that forecasts had shown that there was expected to be a growth in future demand for the school from nursery age and above. The Panel was advised that, in ten years, total demand could reach 185 students. The plan was for the new school building to expand the capacity of the school to provide for a total of 200 pupils.

Regarding the timescale of the project, the Minister advised that the scheme would be working towards obtaining planning permission by mid-2027, with further funding allocated in that year to commence the build. The Panel noted that the proposed Budget cited that the project had the potential to be accelerated. The Panel questioned this and was advised that this was a conversation that the Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills (hereafter, 'CYPES') would have with Treasury, if it was able to access more funding from the general feasibility pot and would also depend on the status of other projects within the wider Government capital programme.[4]

North of St Helier Youth Centre

The total project approval for the North of St Helier Youth Centre (on the former Ann Street Brewery site) is £16.129 million. Future expenditure for the years 2026 – 2028 is £14.728 million. The project was previously being developed under the grouped head of expenditure, 'New School and Educational Developments'.

It was advised that, if the project progressed to plan, the youth centre would open its doors in mid-2028. The Panel asked whether there was funding included in the budget to support safe access and walking routes to the centre. It was confirmed that this had been thought about with regards to the design of the site.

The Panel is supportive of this project and has been previously briefed about the new youth centre and had the opportunity to visit the site on 18th July 2025.

Le Squez

[3] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 5th November 2025
[4] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 28th October 2025, p. 7

The proposed Budget refers to the sponsoring department for the Le Squez major project as 'Education and Lifelong Learning' (page 56), however, it was confirmed that this was incorrect and should reflect 'Children and Families'. The Assistant Minister for Children and Families advised the Panel that the funding would help to provide a "*proper fit-for-purpose, more modern site.*"[5]

The total project approval is currently £7.5 million and the majority will not be spent until 2028-2029, following the completion of the North of St. Helier Youth Centre. The Assistant Minister for Children and Families confirmed that the start of the Le Squez Youth Centre development would be reliant on the completion of the town Youth Centre and, if there was any delay to the St. Helier project, it would have an impact on the work at Le Squez.

At the public hearing in October 2025, the Panel was advised that some outline plans had previously been prepared, but that further work on feasibility would be undertaken in readiness to start the project in 2028.

Fire and Rescue Headquarters

In previous Budget reviews this major project was in development as the 'Ambulance, Fire and Rescue Headquarters' and, in 2024, the Panel learned that this was likely to be changed to provide separate headquarters for the two services. This has been reflected in the proposed Budget, however, the total approved budget remained (of the total £24.403 million) the same.

It was explained that there was a revised feasibility study which had provided a new, updated cost for the separate facilities, however, this had not yet been presented to Ministers in time for the proposed Budget.[6]

Funding in 2026 was projected to be £50,000 for the year, with a further £500,000 in 2027, no planned expenditure in 2028 and then £1 million in 2029. The Panel learned that the plan was for the project to be taken forward as part of the 'Investing in Jersey' Programme. The Panel was advised that the 2 separate costs would be more than the originally projected £24 million. However, it was explained that this figure had been calculated in 2020 and so, even if the joint headquarters was to be progressed, the total cost would likely have changed significantly due to inflation.[7]

In a written submission to the Panel from the States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service Association (FRSA), it was noted that "*there does not appear to be a huge cry from rank-and-file staff for new headquarters, with any haste at least*"[8], and it was suggested that with some investment in the current site, the timing of the new headquarters could be undertaken at an appropriate time. The FRSA advised that the Fire and Rescue Service "*has already determined that any of the identified sites away from its current*

[5] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 31st October 2025, p.8
[6] Transcript - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 28th October 2025, p.14
[7] Transcript - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 28th October 2025, p.14
[8] Written Submission - Budget 2026 - 2029 Review – States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service Association – 10th November 2025

Rouge Bouillon location will, by nature of increased attendance times, put the high-risk populations of St. Helier at greater risk than they already are currently"[9] but the competing needs for the current site with the adjacent school would need to balanced carefully by Government.

Dewberry House – Sexual Assault Referral Centre

The total project approval had increased to £5.991 million which exceeded the threshold for a 'major project' classification. The Panel asked what additional governance procedure had been put in place retrospectively as a result of the development passing the threshold. It was confirmed that this had not yet been met and it was confirmed that once the tenders were returned, this would be the decision point for the major project.[10]

Table 5i – Revenue Heads of Expenditure

In part (b) viii of the proposition the States Assembly is asked to approve the Heads of Expenditure (HoE) for each Department from the funding available in the Consolidated Fund.

Education and Lifelong Learning

Over the course of this 4-year Budget period the estimated HoE for this department will grow from an estimated £187,893 million in 2026 to £190,143 million in 2029.

The Panel asked about planned savings and was provided with the below table showing the planned targets and areas for savings in respect of Education and Lifelong Learning:

Education and Lifelong Learning, VFM savings to be delivered	2025 Target £'000	2026 Target £'000	2027 Target £'000	2028 Target £'000
- 2024 unmet VfM savings carried forward	2,753	2,753	2,753	2,753
- Office Modernisation Project	20	77	109	153
- 2024 Growth Reductions (20% 'haircut')	409	409	409	409
- Removal of posts	789	1,972	1,972	1,972
Total VfM Savings Target	**3,971**	**5,211**	**5,243**	**5,287**

[11]

It was further stated that:

> *2025 has been a year of reviewing the governance and organisational structure of education services but no significant structural changes have yet been made.*
>
> *There have been some changes to senior roles and vacancies have been removed from the structure. This has required activities to be prioritised and*

[9] Written Submission - Budget 2026 - 2029 Review – States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service Association – 10th November 2025

[10] Transcript - Budget 2026 - 2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 28th October 2025, p.16

[11] Letter - Budget 2026 - 2029 Review – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning and Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2025

redistributed amongst the remaining team members with no adverse impact on service delivery to date.[12]

The Panel was also provided with the following information about how the department would achieve part of the savings:

Education and Lifelong Learning	2025 Target	2026 Target	2027 Target	2028 Target
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cash savings achieved (removed recurrently):-				
- Office Modernisation Project	167	167	167	167
- 2024 Growth Reductions (20% 'haircut')	529	529	529	529
- Removal of posts (7)	642	725	725	725
Total cash savings achieved (removed recurrently)	**1,338**	**1,421**	**1,421**	**1,421**

* 30th September 2025

[13]

Children and Families

Over the course of this 4-year Budget period the estimated HoE for this department will grow from an estimated £58,029 million in 2026 to £58,547 million in 2029.

The Panel asked about planned savings and was provided with the below table showing the planned targets and areas for savings in respect of Children and Families:

Children and Families	2025 Target	2026 Target	2027 Target	2028 Target
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
VfM savings to be delivered:-				
- 2024 unmet VfM savings carried forward	880	880	880	880
- Office Modernisation Project	69	348	557	557
- 2024 Growth Reductions (20% 'haircut')	526	526	526	526
- Removal of posts	173	433	433	433
Total VfM Savings Target	**1,648**	**2,187**	**2,396**	**2,396**

Justice and Home Affairs

Over the course of this 4-year Budget period the estimated HoE for this department will grow from an estimated £36,658 million in 2026 to £37,668 million in 2029.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs advised the Panel that the 2025 savings were achieved through the removal of 1 senior manager role at the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service, the removal of a Physical Education Manager role at the Prison, and through a reduction in the rent paid for Jersey Field Squadron residential properties.

[12] Ibid
[13] Letter - Budget 2026 - 2029 Review – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning and Minister for Children and Families – 16th October 2025

The Panel was advised that savings proposals for 2026 were under consideration by the Senior Leadership Team.

States of Jersey Police

Over the course of this 4-year Budget period the estimated HoE for the States of Jersey Police ('SoJP') will reduce from an estimated £31,142 million in 2026 to £31,121 million in 2029. As previously referenced, the Panel has lodged an amendment which proposes increasing the SoJP budget by £240,000 for 2026 The Panel has raised concerns regarding the planned reduction of the Police Community Safety Policing Team. It was noted that three officers will be reallocated to other areas in order to adapt to demand, resulting in a decrease in the number of police constables assigned to the team. In 2025, the team comprised nine constables; however, this number is scheduled to be reduced to six in 2026.

In light of these concerns, the Panel has lodged an amendment to the budget which proposes an increase to the States of Jersey Police budget. This amendment seeks to reinstate funding to ensure that policing resources are sufficient to meet demand. The Panel considers that this measure will strengthen the work of the Building a Safer Community team, support the recommendations of the Violence Against Women and Girls Taskforce report, and contribute more broadly to community safety and prevention.

The Panel learned that the SoJP's 2025 savings target of £125,000 had been achieved by removing 2 full time equivalent (FTE) staff posts within the Business Support unit and there had been a reduction of £47,000 in 2024 investment in relation to the Digital Forensics Unit (reflecting a decision made in 2024).[14] Further efficiency activities and changes were also described to the Panel, including vacancy management, disbandment of the Resolve policing unit and reduction in operating hours of the visitor reception centre.[15]

Looking to savings in 2026, the Panel was advised that SoJP had removed 2.7 FTE Civilian Investigators, equivalent to £187,000 of budget. It was explained that these roles had been instated as part of the Moneyval growth, however, it was explained that with the associated Moneyval work decreasing, the outstanding actions would be undertaken by Police Officers within the Joint Financial Crimes Unit.[16]The Panel has expressed concern regarding the removal of these roles; however, it is satisfied with the explanation provided and accepts that the decision to reallocate responsibilities to Police Officers within the Joint Financial Crimes Unit is justified.

Table 5ii – Capital and Other Projects Heads of Expenditure

Part (b) viii of the Proposition P.70/2025 also asks the States Assembly to approve the amounts to be used for the Capital and Other Projects Heads of Expenditure from the funding available in the Consolidated Fund, as per Table 5ii.

[14] Letter - Budget 2026 - 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 17th October 2025
[15] Ibid
[16] Letter - Budget 2026 - 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 17th October 2025

The Panel will not make a comment about every project in this section (and some have been referenced elsewhere in this paper under 'Major Projects'), however, some points the Panel wishes to highlight are:

New School and Educational Developments

The proposed Budget includes future funding for a school at Gas Place, currently £2.5 million in 2028 and £13 million in 2029.

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning advised the Panel that the next steps for this project would be acquiring the land and that there was funding available for commencing the feasibility work for the project. There is £500,000 of funding available for the Education Estate under the general Feasibility HoE (this will be used for the new school projects at Gas Place and Mont à l'Abbé.[17] The Panel welcomes this proposed investment and supports the development of a new school at Gas Place. The Panel considers that this project represents an important step in addressing future educational needs and ensuring that facilities remain fit for purpose. In particular, the Panel is reassured that funding has been identified to commence feasibility work, which will allow progress to be made on both the Gas Place and Mont à l'Abbé projects.

Loving Homes Estate

This capital investment is described by the Government as a requirement to "*reshape the residential estate to deliver a high quality, sustainable model of care on-Island*".[18] The total cost of the new project will be £11.97 million across the 4 years of the Budget period, plus an additional £625,000 allocated in the general feasibility HoE for the Loving Homes Estate project. The Panel was also advised that separate funding for Greenfields had been spent in 2025, which took the total overall cost up to £14.1 million.[19]

There are two components to the project, namely 'Residential care' and 'Specialist care' and the proposed Budget provides the following breakdown of their costs:

Loving Homes Estate - Breakdown of Grouped Head of Expenditure						
£'000	**Spon Dept**	**Supp Dept**	**2026 Estimate**	**2027 Estimate**	**2028 Estimate**	**2029 Estimate**
Residential Care	C&F	I&E	1,934	2,134	1,067	1,000
Specialist Care	C&F	I&E	335	-	1,833	3,667
Other I&E Estate Projects			**2,269**	**2,134**	**2,900**	**4,667**

Table 21: Loving Homes Estates - Breakdown of Grouped Head of Expenditure

The Panel asked the Minister for Children and Families for further details about what each component would deliver. It was explained that 'Specialist Care' referred to the facilities at Greenfields secure children's home and its site, where an inherent

[17] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 28th October 2025, p. 12

[18] Proposed Budget (Government Plan) 2026-2029, Government of Jersey, September 2025, p. 57

[19] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 31st October 2025, p.11-12

jurisdiction unit would be created and another building on the Greenfields site would be adapted for educational purposes. The Minister advised the Panel that the inherent jurisdiction unit would be delivered in 2026.[20]

The Director of Children's Services explained that:

> *…most of the money on the specialist site is allocated to getting Greenfields up to a good state and then there is some small monies on the refurbishment of the other houses on that site, so that whole site becomes specialist because you will have Greenfields secure and remand and then you will have an assessment house, which is the property we have got now, then there will be another emergency bed, which will also be the remand bed…*[21]

In a submission to the Panel from Jersey Cares, recent concerns about Greenfields were raised:

> *Based on our meetings with young people and published reviews, we have significant concerns about conditions at Greenfields. Until recently, it felt like the worst aspects of a prison—without the safety benefits—due to the building's fabric and certain internal processes. It has neither been a place where people feel at home nor safe. We are pleased to see included in the plan a goal to provide proper outdoor and learning spaces for children confined to a closed home, funding to improve the building, and the creation of a specialist hub to support young people earlier and reduce the risk of coming into restrictive, secure accommodation in the first place.*[22]

With regards to the 'Residential Care' element, in the total sum of approximately £6 million across the 4 years of the Budget period, it was explained that this would change the structure of the residential care homes used by Children's Services. The Minister described that there were currently 9 homes in use, but that some of the homes had 2 or 3 beds, whereas the ideal was 4 beds in each home with a residential manager. The Minister for Children and Families described the practical challenges of the current care homes on the residential estate:

> *…because some of them are old school caretaker's houses and were never really suitable as children's homes, but they were what Children's Services were given. Others have been on leases that end, we lose the use of the building, have to start work on another building, you need planning permission. So we moved to where we have buildings that have been specifically converted as children's homes for the long term. So we have houses with really a minimum of 4 beds, the only 2-bed one that will remain is one for emergency and remand bed.*[23]

The Director of Children's Services advised about the creation of supported accommodation as part of the 'Residential Care' work:

[20] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 31st October 2025, p.10
[21] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 31st October 2025, p.12
[22] Written Submission - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Jersey Cares – 13th November 2025
[23] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 31st October 2025, p.11

... so about £6 million is all the money on creating one supported accommodation property, which will be shared with Andium, where they will build 3 flats and the garden, and then the extra residential homes that will be built in 2027/28, a bit further up line.[24]

In a hearing with the Panel the Minister for Children and Families confirmed that following the changes, there would be 30 beds, plus 2 self-contained flats, which was an increase on the current availability. In follow up correspondence, it was clarified that the estate plan would see 39 beds delivered by the end of 2029.[25] One aspect which was highlighted was that homes had previously been rented for short term periods, which was a high costing model which did not provide stability for children. The new estate plan would see that properties used for residential care for children were owned or leased on a long term basis, in order to provide greater security and stability.

The Panel learned that, whilst there should have been 25 beds currently available, some of these could not be included in the total figures. As one example, it was explained that a building with 3 beds had been condemned for subsidence. Following the hearing the Panel received confirmation in writing that, as at the end of October 2025, there were 18 beds available across the whole of the estate for children in need of residential care. It was clarified that this number did not include the secure home at Greenfields or bed space available for short break arrangements.[26]

Grouped Head of Expenditure, Upgrades to CYPES Estates

The breakdown of this HoE is set out in the proposed Budget as follows:

Upgrades to CYPES Estates - Breakdown of Grouped Head of Expenditure						
£'000	Spon Dept	Supp Dept	2026 Estimate	2027 Estimate	2028 Estimate	2029 Estimate
School Improvements	ELL	ELL	3,000	2,000	1,474	-
Discrimination, Disability & Accessibility Works	ELL	ELL	300	-	-	-
Residential Homes and Secure Settings	C&F	C&F	500	500	500	-
Field Developments & Play Space	ELL	I&E	-	-	1,415	-
Existing Youth Service Facilities	ELL	I&E	-	-	1,400	-
Upgrades to CYPES Estates			**3,800**	**2,500**	**4,789**	**-**

Table 22: Upgrades to CYPES Estates - Grouped Head of Expenditure

27

During a hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning the Panel asked about the £3 million of funding within this budget highlighted for 'School Improvements'. The Panel was subsequently provided with a list of the planned expenditure, which included:

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[24] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 31st October 2025, p.12

[25] Letter - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Minister for Children and Families – 10th November 2025

[26] Letter - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Minister for Children and Families – 10th November 2025

[27] Proposed Budget (Government Plan) 2026-2029, Government of Jersey, September 2025, p. 58

Project Name
School Aircon Replacement (various sites)
Samares Phase 2
St Clements Playground Replacement
First Tower High Level Balustrading
Mont Nicolle Fencing & Gate
Le Rocquier Cookery Room
Grainville Void Infill art/ DT
St Johns School Nursery Outdoor Works
Victoria College Reception Block (starting Oct 2025)
Clairmont Astroturf Changing Room Refurbishment

[28]

Regarding this funding, the Interim Chief Officer for CYPES advised that:

> *…we do a huge amount of work in terms of identifying where risk is. We have a criteria because we get a lot of requests in from schools and then we have to score those, and then we end up with a priority list and then we look at our funding.*[29]

It was clarified that this was not the only budget for building and space improvements in schools, as there was also an Asset Improvement Fund which was used on the same basis of risk and scoring projects.[30]

The Panel also asked about the £300,000 of funding identified for Discrimination, Disability and Accessibility (DDA) works. It was explained that some of the things this was used for was security systems, fob systems, alarms, upgrades to toilets to make them more accessible, removing trip hazards by replacing ball courts and fencing for outside play areas and, also, the development of a nature garden for one of the schools as this was related to its additional resource provision.[31]

The Panel noted that the proposed total spend was lower than in previous Budgets, noting that in 2024-2027 Government Plan the DDA budget was £700,000 and had been reduced. In follow up correspondence it was stated that previous funding had "*exceeded the capacity to deliver*" and that it had therefore been "*right sized to a more deliverable level, focusing on those projects that are most impactful to Islanders and mitigate key risks.*"[32]

The Panel also asked the Minister for Children and Families about the £500,000 of funding for Residential Homes and Secure Settings. During the public hearing it was advised that this funding was used for decommissioning the leased homes, in order to

[28] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 5th November 2025
[29] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 28th October 2025, p. 14
[30] Ibid Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 28th October 2025, p. 14
[31] Ibid Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 28th October 2025, p. 15
[32] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 5th November 2025

bring them back up to a suitable standard and, also, when a new home was opened there were often additional costs, including maintenance.[33]

Further detail was provided in follow up correspondence, and it was explained that there was an estimated spend of £485,000, however it was noted that this did not fully cover the likely costs of damage and remedial work which could not be predicted:

- Refurbishment, kitchen replacement and decoration of one of the current children's homes - £35k
- Dilapidation costs of the closure of a current children's home when the tenancy contract ends at Qtr 4, 2026 - £125k
- Installing specialist CCTV into a new home and decoration of communal areas - £40k
- Refurbishment of a new property being provided as an interim children's home whilst awaiting creation of the new residential estate - £150k
- Essential update works to the emergency bed home, including sprinkler upgrade, decoration and carpets - 63k
- Damage repair buffer £75k

[34]

Major Refurbishments and Upgrades

The Panel considered 2 of the areas which were provided with funding under the Major Refurbishments and Upgrades HoE. The breakdown is provided in the draft Budget as follows:

Major Refurbishments and Upgrades - Breakdown of Grouped Head of Expenditure						
£'000	Spon Dept	Supp Dept	2026 Estimate	2027 Estimate	2028 Estimate	2029 Estimate
Major Refurbishment and Upgrades	I&E	I&E	2,650	4,460	2,000	2,000
Fire Safety in CYPES Estate	I&E	I&E	2,130	-	-	-
Highlands College	I&E	I&E	1,895	-	-	-
Major Refurbishment and Upgrades			**6,675**	**4,460**	**2,000**	**2000**

Table 23: Major Refurbishments and Upgrades - Breakdown of Grouped Head of Expenditure

Fire Safety in the CYPES Estate

The Panel was advised that the work to address fire safety was across the whole estate. It was confirmed that the work was being led by Jersey Property Holdings, with support from officers within CYPES. Some of the work currently underway was a project to replace fire doors in primary schools and it was confirmed that works at the following 5 primary schools would be undertaken in Q1 2026:

- Jersey College Preparatory School;
- Mont Nicolle Primary School and Nursery;
- Mont à l'Abbé Primary School;
- Janvrin Primary School and Nursery; and
- La Moye Primary School and Nursery.

[33] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 31st October 2025, p.17
[34] Letter - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Minister for Children and Families – 10th November 2025

It was confirmed that works at a further 8 schools would be tendered in December 2025, with work to commence on site in Q2/3 2026.[35] It was confirmed that the work to address the fire safety issues would be completed in the next year, as there was no funding in the budget beyond 2026.[36]

Highlands College

The following list of 2026 projects was provided to the Panel in respect of the work to be undertaken at Highlands College:

Location	Project Description
Highlands Art Building	First Floor Roof
Highlands Art Building	Ground Floor Roof
Highlands Art & Media	Complete Boiler upgrades Art & Media from 2025 due to CYPES supply works at d'Hautree
Highlands University Centre	Boiler Room Upgrade
Highlands Construction	Boiler Room Upgrade
Highlands Brunel	Boiler Room Upgrade
Highlands Stephenson	Boiler Room Upgrade
Nash Building	Refurbishment and heating system
Link to Turner building	Refurbishment and structural upgrades

[37]

The Panel asked why there was no feasibility work for the future of Highlands College included in the draft Budget. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning referenced that this would become part of the proposed Investment in Jersey Project.[38]

The Panel asked how much funding would be required to progress the feasibility work at Highlands sooner, but the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning was not able to provide this information.

Recommendation 1: The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should prioritise developing the feasibility work required for Highlands College in order to ensure the future development and prosperity of the site.

<u>Army and Sea Cadet Headquarters</u>

The proposed Budget for this capital project has reduced significantly (from £4.9 million) since previous Budgets and Government Plans to £1.6 million in the draft Budget. The Chief Officer for Justice and Home Affairs advised that:

> *Yes, so that reflects a slight change in approach in conjunction with the cadet leaders and the relevant Ministers where we will be looking to develop something on an already existing site, so perhaps a school. Those discussions*

[35] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 5th November 2025
[36] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 31st October 2025, p.9
[37] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 5th November 2025
[38] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 28th October 2025, p. 11

are still underway. We are obviously still committed to delivering on the 2019 or 2020 proposition that then Constable Norman brought that they would have a permanent base of operations, which is the phrasing in the proposition, and are confident that one of a number of opportunities that we are currently scoping will deliver for the reduced amount of money, but we are not quite there yet.[39]

It was further explained that the funding was included in the proposed Budget for 2026. The Chief Officer advised that the timescale might be too soon to complete the project, but confirmed that feasibility work on a particular option was about to start and there could be progress by mid-2026.[40]

In a submission to the Panel from the Royal Jersey Militia Army Cadet Force, the Panel was advised that the preference of this cadet force was to retain their base with the Jersey Field Squadron at Le Quesne Barracks, rather than go forward with a joint cadet headquarters with the Sea Cadets.

Further details about the location or scope to the new permanent base of operations was not provided at the time of the review, however, the Panel has noted that it would like to hear further details about the plans as soon as these are available.

Recommendation 2: The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs should publicise details of the updated plans for the Army and Sea Cadet Headquarters at the earliest opportunity, including details about any consultation that was undertaken as part of the decision-making process.

Prison Phase 8

The Panel was advised that Phase 8 of the prison development works had been planned as the new education multipurpose facility, however, there was "*a very slight phasing challenge*"[41] in the Budget, so the proposed funding would not deliver the original intended Phase 8.

The Panel was advised that the funding of £660,000 provided for prison capital developments, would be reprioritised for an urgent need to replace 2 boilers in K Wing and L Wing. The Panel challenged the cost of the two boilers, and the Minister subsequently provided the following information:

The current boilers were installed in August 2009 (serving 118 cells), the boilers have reached the end of life. The budget of £600,000 is the money available from the underspend on the Phase 6 of the development plan (previously listed as outworkers' unit). £560,000 will be used for the

[39] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 28th October 2025, p.16
[40] Ibid Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 28th October 2025, p.16
[41] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 28th October 2025, p.17

replacement of boilers and £40,000 was used for security fence repairs. The remaining £60,000 will be contingency for the boiler project.[42]

The Chief Officer confirmed that future prison capital development included:

- Phase 7 – Care and Separation Unit;
- Phase 8 – New Education and workshops;
- Phase 9 – New healthcare facility; and
- Phase 10 – Replacement security fencing.

However, it was confirmed that this was not showing on the future capital development Budget for 2027 – 2029 as it would likely be undertaken post 2029. It was also confirmed that it would form part of the 'Investing in Jersey' scoping work for future capital developments.[43]

Next Passport Project

The Panel asked written questions about this Information Technology project, which has a projected budget of £550,000 in 2026 in the proposed Budget. The Panel was advised that the project is being run jointly with His Majesty's Passport Office (HMPO), the Crown Dependencies and Gibraltar and would allow access to modified versions of HMPO's passport application and processing solutions which would enable the continuation of the Jersey variant of the British passport.

It was confirmed that the total project budget of £850,000 had been reprofiled to be £425,000 in both 2025 and 2026 to better reflect the payment milestones. The project was expected to be complete during 2026 and that the new system would be available to Islanders from early 2027.[44]

Combined Control Room

The Panel asked whether this funding was connected to the additional revenue expenditure growth related to the Emergency Services Control Centre (Ambulance and Fire and Rescue) ('ESCC'). The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs confirmed that the £200,000 of funding for the Combined Control Room Information Technology project was ongoing funding relating to technology improvements. It was explained that:

In 2026, this will be committed to the provision of contractual payments to the supplier of the Fire and Rescue Service Mobile Data Terminals platform. There will also be other project costs, including integration and network connectivity (JT and SURE). Additionally, with the ESCC Integrated Command and Control System (ICCS) moving to live implementation in January 2026, some of this

[42] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 6th November 2025
[43] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 28th October 2025, p.18
[44] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 6th November 2025

budget will be used for training, room booking, and other peripherals (headsets, desks, monitor arms) for the ICCS system.[45]

Electronic Patient Records

From previous Budget reviews the Panel had understood that this project related to the Ambulance Service, which transferred from the Justice and Home Affairs Department (JHA) to Health and Social Care in 2025. The Panel queried why JHA was still listed as the Sponsoring and supporting department in the proposed Budget.

The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs advised that the substantive part of the project had been completed (£573,000 of prior year expenditure), with £94,000 remaining to be used for mobile data solutions for the Ambulance Service. However, the project had been paused and the rationale for it remaining with JHA was due to "*knowledge and awareness of the requirements and its potential fit into a project currently in progress for the States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service for Mobile Data Terminals to be provisioned within SJFRS vehicles.*"[46]

Replacement Assets and Minor Capital

For the £300,000 of expenditure for Education and Lifelong Learning the Panel was provided with the following list of expenditure:

Site	Project Title
Le Rocquier	Playground Fencing
Bel Royal	Intruder Alarm Replacement
St Clement	Intruder & Physical Access Control (PAC) replacement
St Clement	Ball netting replacement
Bel Royal	Nature garden upgrade
Grainville	Stage fire curtains & blinds
St Lukes	Ball court & fencing replacement
JCG	J3 food & nutrition classroom refurbishment
First Tower	Intruder Alarm
La Moye	Replacement of trim trail & playground
D'Auvergne	ARC Toilets
JCG	Security

[47]

The Panel notes that some of these items were referred to in the Minister and officers responses to queries about the funding for DDA. The Panel has not had the opportunity to ask further questions to clarify if there is any duplication or whether funding is split between different HoE for these expenses.

The Panel noted that the funding for the replacement assets and minor capital for Justice and Home Affairs remained at £380,000 and had not increased between 2025 and 2026. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs advised that there had been an increase in

[45] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 6th November 2025
[46] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 6th November 2025
[47] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 5th November 2025

2025 (however, the Panel has reviewed recent years and believes that the increase to £380,000 was made in 2024, from £162,000 in 2023).

Some examples of this type of expenditure provided to the Panel were; road traffic rescue equipment, replacement prison fencing, boilers, back-up generators, defibrillators, electric vehicle firefighting blankets, commercial dishwashers, X-ray machines.[48]

The Panel noted that the funding for the replacement assets and minor capital for SoJP had remained at £350,000 and had not increased between 2025 and 2026. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs advised that there had been an increase to this funding in 2025, the Panel notes that this had been £200,000 in 2024.

The Panel was advised that SoJP had seen some essential items seen price rises of up to 40%, which had accelerated the deletion of allocated budgets and placed additional strain on operation planning. The Panel was advised that:

> *To address these challenges, a rigorous RAG-rating is applied process to all purchases. This ensures that critical items, those essential for public safety and operational effectiveness, are prioritised for replacement or acquisition. Less urgent requirements are deferred to future years, enabling us to maximise the impact of available funds while maintaining core policing capabilities.*[49]

Revenue Expenditure Growth (Appendix 3: Supplementary Financial Table)

The Panel summarises its key comments about the additional revenue growth funding below:

Nursery 2-3 year olds

This proposed revenue expenditure growth would be used to expand Government funding support for 15 hours of term time childcare for 2-3 year olds. The additional proposed Budget expenditure is:

	2026	***2027***	***2028***	***2029***
Nursery 2-3 year olds	£3,000,000	£3,000,000	£1,800,000	£1,900,000

The Panel asked why the finding was £3 million for both 2026 and 2027 and then it reduced to £1.8 million per annum in 2028 and 2029. It was explained that the total additional revenue expenditure in the proposed Budget was in addition to funding approved in previous years:

> ***Programme Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills:***
>
> *In summary terms, over the 4-year period, approximately £18 million is going to be invested in that scheme, of which £8.5 million is pre-approved from*

[48] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 6th November 2025
[49] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 6th November 2025

previous budgets, and just under £10 million, about £9.7 million is contained in budget 2026-29 proposals. So it is a combination of those 2.[50]

During the scrutiny review it was confirmed to the Panel that the 15 hours offer for 2–3-year-olds would be universal to all children and families in the 2–3-year-old age bracket. It was clarified that this would not be effective from the child's second birthday, but the September in the year they turned 3 (i.e. one year before support from the Nursery Education Fund (NEF)) and was expected to help approximately 700 families.[51] It was also confirmed that the financial support would be available to families from January 2026, and there was a possibility that this could be applied retrospectively if the administration system was not established by that time.

The Annex accompanying the proposed Budget indicated that the investment would expand the provision provided through the NEF, however, the Panel subsequently learned that the NEF would not be used to facilitate the additional funding and it would be provided to parents directly, but in arrears of their payments to a nursery, or childminder.[52]

The submission to the Panel from the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCCJ) highlighted that:

> *the OCCJ views this as a welcome measure that has the potential to make a real difference for young children and their families in Jersey The key will be in ensuring that funding is matched by safe, high-quality nursery places, a sufficient and trained workforce, adequate supply of places and staff, and clear data on impact.*[53]

The Panel received a submission from The Jersey Child Care Trust which welcomed the Government's proposals. [54] Their submission can be read in full here, and highlighted that:

- Around 15 hours per week of early education was associated with positive cognitive outcomes for disadvantaged children and increasing hours beyond this, did not consistently improve outcomes;
- The term time limitations of the funding offer could create pressures on parents and providers;
- It was suggested that child care provided by accredited nannies should be included in the funding offer;
- The success of the offer would depend on workforce quality and stability; and

[50] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 28th October 2025, p. 16
[51] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 28th October 2025, p. 17
[52] Transcript – Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 19th November 2025, p. 32
[53] Written Submission - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey – 14th November 2025
[54] Written Submission - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Jersey Child Care Trust – 24th November 2025

- The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should engage with parents to understand if they need more, or different, information about early years providers.

The Panel received a submission from the Jersey Association of Childcare Providers (which can be read in full here) who confirmed that:

> *We believe that the proposal is extremely positive and will be beneficial for parents across the island. We are also pleased that childminders have been included and that the proposed funding represents a fair and supportive offer.*[55]

However, they highlighted a concern which was that the funding would support families already using childminder services but may not fully accommodate the potential increased demand. It was also explained that some childminders were at capacity with their ratios, so would not be able to take on an additional funded only space, for example, for parents who only wanted to utilise the 15 hours. It was explained that:

> *If ratios were adjusted to allow for one additional (4 spaces) funded-only space, childminders could offer more flexibility — for instance, splitting two 15-hour funded places across the week (e.g., one child Monday–Wednesday morning, another Wednesday afternoon–Friday). This would increase availability without compromising the quality of care or exceeding safe limits.*[56]

The Panel also received a written submission from the Jersey Early Years Association (JEYA) which can be read in full here. JEYA's submission highlighted that all members were supportive of funding support for working parents and the universal offer in relation to childcare, however, they highlighted the following concerns:

- Concerns about the implementation date being set as 1st January 2026, if the nursery settings were to be involved in any scheme that was similar to the NEF partnership agreement;
- The majority of the members of JEYA had advised that the rate of £11 per hour was not viable as it does not include any margins for sustainability and cross-subsidisation; and
- There was a lack of consultation on the number of funded hours and concern was expressed that 15 hours had been set without this, citing that it would not generate any material improvements in terms of developmental outcomes for children, and would not have the economic advantage of supporting parents back to the workplace.[57]

Regarding the calculated rate of £11 per hour, the Minister emphasised that the rate had been calculated by an officer from the Economic Development Department in conjunctions with nursery providers. The Minister confirmed that:

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[55] Written Submission - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Jersey Association of Childcare Providers – 13th November 2025
[56] Written Submission - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Jersey Association of Childcare Providers – 13th November 2025
[57] Written Submission - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Jersey Early Years Association – 14th November 2025

The rate that was initially set was £10.24, we have said £11 so that there was a slight upgrade to that to encourage and sustainability. I think that is a fair rate and that is the rate going forward.[58]

However, JEYA have highlighted that that this calculated rate of £10.24 had not taken into account the cross-subsidisation for 0–2-year-olds. It was explained that this was important in the Early Years financial model to keep fees affordable for parents as the cost base for 0-2s is “disproportionately high” and therefore, the fees paid by the older age groups offset some of that disproportionate cost to keep it affordable for parents.[59]

JEYA also highlighted that:

The exercise that was done was based on figures for Q4 2024 and the proposed rate of £11 is for Q1 2026. Since then, most settings have seen their costs increase. They will have implemented by pay rises for their staff in that period, with many settings anticipating that their employment costs will have risen far more than 2.7%.[60]

It was highlighted that the sector had suffered inflationary pressures with the move to bring the Minimum Wage in line with the Living Wage.

The Panel is supportive of the Government’s ambition to provide further financial support for childcare of 2–3-year-olds, however, is concerned that a significant representative of the nursery sector is not supportive of the plans. Furthermore, it is clear that the announcement of this plan has been made before the detail has been finalised, with early reference to the use of a NEF style funding structure being replaced with the detail that families will be reimbursed in arrears by Government. It is also unclear how this system will be administered and the expense of any new system to facilitate, validate and authorise approximately 700 payments to families on a regular basis.

Recommendation 3: The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should undertake an urgent review of the funding rate of £11.00 per hour for 2–3-year-old childcare funding.

Recommendation 4: During March 2026, the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should meet with the Panel to provide an update about the new process for 2-3 year old childcare funding, including details about the administration and payments process in its first 2 months of operation.

Recommendation 5: The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should consider adding childcare provided by accredited nannies to the funding offer.

Recommendation 6: The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should review adjusting ratios for child minders to allow more flexibility.

Teachers Terms and Conditions

58 Transcript – Quarterly Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 19th November 2025, p. 32
59 Written Submission - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Jersey Early Years Association – 14th November 2025
60 Written Submission - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Jersey Early Years Association – 14th November 2025

The Annex accompanying the proposed Budget describes that, from 2026, this revenue expenditure growth will increase the time available to teachers for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time by gradually reducing weekly teaching hours. This will require the equivalent of 23 additional teachers and forms part of the wider programme to enhance teachers' terms and conditions. The proposed Budget expenditure is:

	2026	***2027***	***2028***	***2029***
Teachers' terms and conditions	£1,800,000	£1,800,000	£1,800,000	£1,800,000

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning advised that:

> *But the really key principle is we are directing this money and those changes, as much as anything, into freeing up teachers to have the time to do their job. Because, if you allow that, they get better at it. More will stay, more will commit to the profession longer term, can survive doing that, and we have a better workforce and we have a better education system.*[61]

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning also advised the Panel that there had been "*very open, very positive*"[62] dialogue with trade unions and it was confirmed that there had been support for the Government's proposals from the Terms and Conditions working group. The Panel also received confidential submissions relating to teachers' terms and conditions, which have informed its consideration of this area. The Panel did write to the teaching unions about this proposed Budget proposition but has not received a formal response in order to corroborate this position.

Children's Services Improvement Programme

The additional revenue expenditure is proposed to be used to "*restructure the Residential Estate and create additional homes for children in States care*"[63] together with the recruitment and retention of skilled staff and expanding the Multi-Disciplinary Service. The Annex describes that "*without urgent action, the system risks failing the very children it is meant to protect*."[64]

	2026	***2027***	***2028***	***2029***
Children's Services Improvement Programme	£7,615,000	£7,953,000	£8,623,000	£8,342,000

The Panel is aware that significant additional expenditure has been provided to Children's Services, for example:

- Government Plan 2024-2027, the project for Children's Social Care Reform – new homes: £6.8 million across 4 years;

[61] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 28th October 2025, p. 22-23
[62] Ibid, p.23
[63] Proposed Annex Budget 2026 – 2029, Government of Jersey, September 2025, p. 22
[64] Proposed Annex Budget 2026 – 2029, Government of Jersey, September 2025, p. 22

- Government Plan 2023 – 2026, 2 projects: Children's Social Care Reform: £26.22 million over 4 years and Social worker recruitment and retention: £4.5 million over 4 years;
- Government Plan 2020 – 2023, 2 projects: Children's Change Programme: £6.19 million over 4 years and the Independent Care Inquiry: £6.48 million over 4 years.

The Panel referenced this and asked why further significant investment was required. The Minister for Children and Families stated:

> *There has been a lot of money in the past spent on Children's Services. I am not convinced that the money in the past was spent in the best way. We did not appear to have made significant progress past the Jersey Care Inquiry and so I am well aware that this is something that is often said, Children's Services have had a lot of money over the years. It was sort of done ad hoc and I think that is the worst way of spending money. So, where the increases come, we have more and more children referred through to the service. We have rising costs. So, in 2021, there were 630 referred; this year there were 721 children who came through our doors or were referred to us, and you can expect that to continue increasing I think. One of the problems, we talk about the past, is that there is an awful lot spoken about early intervention, but it was not really taking place, and the Inspection Report, the most recent one, highlighted that. So we can expect more to come from that.*[65]

During the hearing the Panel pressed on the point of urgency and asked why this funding would be different and have better success than previous investment:

> ***The Minister for Children and Families:***
>
> *I think the first thing is that we have got a plan. In the past there has been no plan. There is a clear plan.*
>
> ***Deputy H.M. Miles:***
>
> *We had a children's plan.*
>
> ***The Minister for Children and Families:***
>
> *We have not had a transformation plan as to how the service should be transformed. We have never had that. We have never had a proper residential plan. This is the first time where we have got that. I have got confidence that things are changing. As I said, the staff can see that as well and I think that we come back in a year's time, or somebody else comes back, and you will see that this is money well spent.*

[65] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 31st October 2025, p.18

It was further clarified by the Director of Children's Services that much of the previous investment had been invested into "*making the service run how it should run*"[66] and that significant investment had been made to provide a budget for UK based placements.

In the submission to the Panel from Jersey Cares, this query about how funding would be different was echoed in a quote shared from a young person with care experience

> *There does still need to be improvement in children's services and in providing stable loving homes so this is a good thing, but there are only a small number of children live in children's homes and there are other bits of the experience of being in care that are still not right. I can remember being told in the last few years that money was being spent on children's homes and that Greenfields would improve, but it didn't make a big difference then—so how can we be sure that more money will make a big difference now? I would be keen to know if more money is being spent on children's services, where will the money come from and what other ways might that make life challenging for us as Islanders in the future?*[67]

It was confirmed that some of the funding from this additional revenue expenditure would be used to support Fostering, including the introduction of the Mockingbird support service, which was an aspect referenced and welcomed by Jersey Cares[68]. There was also funding for the multi-disciplinary service which was used to support social workers.

The Panel wrote to the Children's Commissioner for Jersey to enquire about this additional revenue expenditure. The response confirmed that OCCJ welcomed the proposed expenditure and had been briefed about the plans. The submission highlighted that:

> *Having previously raised grave concerns about the implications of the lack of sufficiency of available care placements, we consider this to be an essential investment for some of the Island's most vulnerable children.*[69]

The OCCJ have opined that the funding is "*crucial*" and, importantly:

> *The improvements will hopefully prevent both the opening of ad-hoc and frequently solo-occupation homes at crisis points and the need for children to be left in unsafe circumstances. Instead, we hope it will bring about increased stability and permanence for children who need to be in the care of the Minister.*[70]

The Panel is supportive of this additional investment.

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[66] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Children and Families – 31st October 2025, p.20
[67] Written Submission - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Jersey Cares – 13th November 2025 [quoting a young person with care experience]
[68] Written Submission - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Jersey Cares – 13th November 2025
[69] Written Submission - Budget 2026-2029 Review – Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey – 14th November 2025
[70] Ibid

Recommendation 7: The Minister for Children and Families should report on how improvements made through the Children's Services Improvement programme and Loving Homes estate capital investment have been made.

Fire and Rescue Service Workforce

The following additional revenue expenditure is included in the proposed Budget:

	2026	***2027***	***2028***	***2029***
Fire and Rescue Services Workforce	£413,000	£1,306,000	£1,306,000	£1,306,000

The Annex accompanying the proposed Budget describes how this funding will be utilised to "*strengthen capacity and resilience by increasing frontline firefighter numbers, recruiting key non-unformed specialists in safety, risk and assurance, upgrading essential operational equipment and IT systems, and sustaining the Emergency Planning Unit at its recently enhanced capacity*".[71]

The Panel was also advised that, following the approvals for further funding for the States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service (SoJFRS) in the 2023-2027 Government Plan, this had subsequently been reduced in order to meet savings targets in 2023 and 2024, which had seen the removal of 2 Crew Commander rank firefighter roles. The Minister advised that the impact of this was largely in operational policy and training areas and could be managed from 2027 if the new revenue expenditure investment was approved in the proposed Budget.

During a hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs and the Chief Fire Officer of SoJFRS gave an outline of how the funding would be used. It was clarified that £204,000 of the additional funding would support the emergency planning function, which was a Government wide function, resourced with 4.5 FTE which had previously been resourced by interim major incident funding.[72] The Chief Fire Officer also advised that:

> *…there is a post going into the Fire and Rescue Service. The intention at the moment is that that is going to be an organisational learning and assurance post. At the moment, the States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service has 3 non-firefighter jobs in it. This would take it to 4. Obviously, the business case requested more in all regards, but this is what the Government are proposing at this stage.*[73]

It was also explained that funding would also pay for:

- Specialist software, namely, mobile data system and technology which made sure that firefighters could quickly access critical information when responding to incidents;

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[71] Proposed Annex Budget 2026 – 2029, Government of Jersey, September 2025, p. 42
[72] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 28th October 2025, p.18
[73] Transcript – Budget 2026-2029 Review – Hearing with the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 28th October 2025, p.19

- Equipment, it was stated that the SoJFRS currently did not have enough PPE to provide 2 sets of PPE for all of their firefighters, but this was important to ensure that decontamination could properly be undertaken when required;
- Training; and
- Further firefighter roles in later years of the proposed Budget.

In the submission to the Panel from the FRSA they advised that the funding would provide much needed investment into the SoJFRS:

> *For too long, Government has not adequately invested in the SJFRS to provide an environment that appropriately considers the risk to staff, Islander's and visitors, particularly in respect of an increased professional competence within the sector, as measured against UK best practice of the Fire Standards Board and the National Operational Guidance framework.*[74]

Emergency Services Control Centre (ESCC)

This funding will support the hybrid control centre for Ambulance and Fire and Rescue Service.

	2026	***2027***	***2028***	***2029***
Emergency Services Control Room	£300,000	£460,000	£460,000	£460,000

The Chief Officer for Justice and Home Affairs advised the Panel that the resourcing would be increased by 4 controllers and one additional management post, it was advised that:

> *There has been so much change in the space around both Ambulance and Fire and Rescue control standards and requirements and the need for professionalism in those functions that we have recognised that we need those functions to be more specialist. That may lead to a case for separation. That was set out in the business case that you have seen that that was an option. It was not the option that was pursued for next year but that buys us a bit of time really to do that analysis in more detail. There are obviously pros and cons. If you keep the team together, you have got one team of controllers that look more efficient on the face of it because they are together answering the volume of calls. If you split them, you would have to have 2 teams that cover 24/7 but there could be really significant effectiveness reasons to do that so 2026 will be a bit of an interim year.*

The Panel asked whether there were any challenges of running a hybrid control room now that the States of Jersey Ambulance Service was under the Health and Social Services Directorate rather than Justice and Home Affairs. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs advised the following in a written response to the Panel:

> *The ESCC continues to operate as it did before the transfer of the Ambulance Service to Health and Care Jersey on 1 July 2025. Governance arrangements*

[74] Written Submission - Budget 2026 - 2029 Review – States of Jersey Fire and Rescue Service Association – 10th November 2025

have been strengthened so that there is now a monthly Strategic Board for the ESCC, which includes both the Chief Ambulance Officer and the Chief Fire Officer. There is a Service Level Agreement in place between the Chief Officer for Justice and Home Affairs, and each of the Heads of Service, setting out the service which will be provided by the ESCC for each of the Emergency Services. These arrangements will remain in place, and continue to be strengthened, until any further strategic decisions on the future operation of the control functions for the Ambulance and Fire & Rescue Services are taken and we are confident that they remain appropriate at the current time.[75]

Vaping Tax

The Annex to the proposed Budget describes this funding as an investment to upgrade the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service excise duty system, CAESAR. It will also recruit 1 FTE specialist member of staff to work with businesses, educate importers, and oversee compliance, together with supporting public messaging about changes.

	2026	***2027***	***2028***	***2029***
Vaping Tax	£146,000	£100,000	£80,000	£82,000

The Panel asked the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs how difficult it was to upgrade the CAESAR system and whether any upgrade costs were included in business-as-usual budgets. The Panel was advised that, in 2026, £40,000 of the total £146,000 would be used for the upgrade of CAESAR. It was explained that annual maintenance, support and minor upgrades could be accommodated in the usual budget, but that more significant upgrades, or ones which required extra functionality required additional funding. The Minister further advised that:

Forecast costs for CAESAR development for the vaping tax have been split into both one off and recuring costs to reflect the initial budget requirement for the design, implementation and testing of the new excise codes with a third-party developer. In addition, there is a small additional budget forecasted for 2027 for minor updates and necessary ongoing development associated with excise collection.[76]

It was explained that £20,000 was the estimated cost for producing published and printed material to publicise and educate about the new tax. In response to queries about how the costs compared to the introduction of other taxes or duties that JCIS were responsible for collecting, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs confirmed that the costs align with previous changes in the tax/duties area.[77]

Other matters

[75] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 6th November 2025
[76] Ibid Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 6th November 2025
[77] Ibid Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Justice and Home Affairs – 6th November 2025

The Panel learned that the Library Services budget was £1.67 million in 2026. This was a reduction of £50,000 from 2025 due to the removal of a vacant post, as part of the contribution to the savings (VFM) programme.[78]

The Panel also received a submission from the Jersey Student Loan Support Group, which expressed disappointment that there was not further detail relating to Student Finance detailed in the proposed Budget, including how estimates are included for how much student university fees and maintenance grants may increase.[79]

Conclusion

The Panel summarises its findings and recommendations as follows:

Findings:

1. There will be a transfer of £1.7 million from the COCF to the Consolidated Fund for the purpose of funding Dewberry House.

2. Demand for primary and secondary places at Mont à l'Abbé school has risen significantly since 2016/7, from a total of 89 places in 2016/17 to 132 places in 2025/26. The forecast for 2035 is that total demand could reach 185 places. The major project to build a purpose built secondary school premises would provide a total capacity across the primary and secondary campus for 200 pupils.

3. The North of St Helier Youth Centre project is expected to open its doors in mid-2028. Per the Government's current plans, the development of a Youth Centre at Le Squez will be reliant on the completion of the centre in St. Helier.

4. The proposed Budget confirms that the Fire and Rescue Headquarters project will now be separate from any future Ambulance Service Headquarters. The total cost in the proposed Budget remains detailed at £24 million, however, the Panel received confirmation that this will increase when it is taken forward.

5. The funding for a school at Gas Place remains in a grouped HoE for New School and Educational Developments and is expected to progress in 2028.

6. Funding for the Loving Homes Estates will support the specialist care at Greenfields Secure Children's Home and, also, provide investment in acquiring more suitable properties for the residential care provided by Children's Services. It was confirmed that there were currently 18 beds in the Children's residential estate but this will increase to 39 if investment in the proposed Budget is approved (excluding Greenfields beds).

7. The project improving the fire safety in the CYPES estate will be completed in 2026.

[78] Letter - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning – 5th November 2025
[79] Written Submission - Budget 2026 – 2029 Review – Jersey Student Loans Support Group – 24th October 2025

8. Further upgrades and building improvements will be undertaken at Highlands College in 2026. The Panel did not ascertain a figure required for progressing feasibility for the development of the site.

9. There has been a significant drop of £3.3 million in the proposed budget for the Army and Sea Cadet Headquarters, from the previously approved £4.9 million to £1.6 million. The scope of the project has changed with a plan to develop Headquarters at an existing site, rather than have a new purpose-built facility. The Panel learned that the Royal Jersey Militia Army Cadet Force is content with its location base at Le Quesne Barracks.

10. The prison will use funding of £660,000 to meet the urgent need of replacing 2 boilers in K Wing and L Wing. The phasing for prison projects has gone out of sync, so the original intended Phase 8 (namely new Education and workshops) would follow with phases 7, 9 and 10 after 2029.

11. The additional revenue expenditure to provide 15 hours of weekly child care for 2–3-year-olds in term time is supported in principle by external stakeholders, however, JEYA has raised concerns about the calculation of the rate and has said that £11 per hour is not viable for many of their settings. The Panel also has concerns about the practicalities of the administrative functions of reimbursing families in arrears and whether this may create challenges for those on low incomes who would otherwise not utilise the hours.

12. The proposed Budget includes additional revenue expenditure of £32.5 million across 4 years for the Children's Services Improvement Plan, which would build on significant investment approved in previous years.

13. The funding for the Fire and Rescue Services Workforce will support a variety of aspects of the Service. The FRSA has said that there has not been sufficient investment by the Government in the SoJFRS in order for there to be sufficient consideration of the risks posed to staff.

14. The investment in the hybrid control centre will support the provision of specialist staff in the control room, however, it has been confirmed that the model of a joint control room will be monitored and further analysis undertaken in order to decide if it is the best model to continue with in the long term.

15. The Jersey Customs and Immigration Service will receive further additional revenue funding of £408,000 over the 4 year period of the proposed Budget in order to facilitate the collection of a new tax on vaping.

Recommendations:

1. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should prioritise developing the feasibility work required for Highlands College in order to ensure the future development and prosperity of the site.

2. The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs should publicise details of the updated plans for the Army and Sea Cadet Headquarters at the earliest opportunity, including details about any consultation that was undertaken as part of the decision-making process.

3. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should undertake an urgent review of the funding rate of £11.00 per hour for 2–3-year-old childcare funding.

4. During March 2026, the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should meet with the Panel to provide an update about the new process for 2-3 year old childcare funding, including details about the administration and payments process in its first 2 months of operation.

5. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should consider adding childcare provided by accredited nannies to the funding offer.

6. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning should review adjusting ratios for child minders to allow more flexibility.

7. The Minister for Children and Families should report on how improvements made through the Children's Services Improvement programme and Loving Homes estate capital investment have been made.

The Panel will write to all of the Ministers who have engaged with the Panel's review to follow up on these Comments and request a formal response to the Panel's recommendations.