

2.4. Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North of the Chief Minister regarding a technical efficiencies programme (OQ.265/2025):

Will the Chief Minister advise what consideration, if any, has been given to introducing a technical efficiencies programme, and if none, could he specify what programmes, such as the adoption of new technologies, are currently in place to ensure that the Government maximises outputs while reducing their inputs, and if no programmes are in place, explain why not?

Deputy L.J. Farnham of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (The Chief Minister):

Yes, I am happy to confirm that the Government have a number of programmes that will save money through the application of technology. These programmes are part of this Council of Minister's drive to curb the growth of the public service and they are being implemented alongside the recruitment restrictions and the reduction in use of consultancy. For example, the Transform programme in the Employment, Social Security and Housing Department will introduce a new I.T. (information technology) platform to replace the current Nessie benefits management system. It will reduce staff costs and other expenditure by at least £950,000 a year once the programme is complete in 2028. The application of technology, including artificial intelligence, will be crucial to reducing the unsustainable growth in our public service. I hope that States' Members will join the Government in February when we will be presented with a blueprint, a proposal, for further savings moving forward.

2.4.1 Deputy M.B. Andrews:

The Chief Minister mentioned a number of programmes. Would it not be more feasible if the Chief Minister could bring forward one overall programme of that which involves technical efficiencies where we can monitor the level of inputs across time and also the changes to outputs within the public sector?

Deputy L.J. Farnham:

Having a one plan fix all is a wonderful ideology, but in practice it is much more complex and that is why we have chosen to introduce programmes relevant to the departments with which they refer. For example, the Transport Reform Programme is a good idea. Nevertheless, I understand where the Deputy is coming from, and I want to reassure Members that this Government is doing everything it can to drive further efficiencies, and that technology will be at the forefront of this moving forward.