

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
BY DEPUTY R.S. KOVACS OF ST. SAVIOUR
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON TUESDAY 7th APRIL 2026
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 14th APRIL 2026**

Question

“Further to the adoption of [P.28/2024 as amended](#), Youth Service Provision, and the conclusion of the report, ‘Review of the Statutory Youth Service ([R.59/2026](#)) that “*statutory status would not achieve the aim of the original proposition*”, will the Minister explain how the report delivered on the proposition’s stated intention, advising in particular –

- (a) the scope, nature and scale of consultation and engagement with key stakeholders, young people, the Youth Service, Parishes, front-line staff and Parish youth committees (such as Maufant Youth Centre) to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of statutory status;
- (b) what involvement, if any, there was from the current funders of the service (the Parishes and local charity committees);
- (c) the procedures employed to assess any practical implications, including Parish relationships and operational flexibility;
- (d) whether comparable statutory youth service models in the UK or abroad were reviewed and, if so, what lessons or risks were identified or considered; and
- (e) what mechanisms or safeguards are in place, or will be put in place, to ensure that the Youth Service continues to exist and thrive and is protected from future budget cuts?”

Answer

- (a) Moving a provision to a statutory service involves legal, financial and operational considerations that require specialist expertise. These factors can be complex, particularly for individuals, including children and young people who do not have relevant qualifications or professional expertise. Engagement was therefore focussed on areas appropriate to the knowledge and experience of those involved. Discussions focused on practical service issues that might change, such as what the service offers, who it supports, and how funding is used, rather than detailed legal matters.
- (b) The majority of funding for the service is provided by the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department (CYPES), with the remainder mainly funded by individual parishes. The proposal was discussed with officers responsible for delivering the service and overseeing its finances. A meeting was also held with the Comité des Connétables as a major stakeholder with the Assistant Minister for Children and Families, alongside the Associate Director for Young People’s Services and the Head of Youth Service. The purpose of the meeting was to present the review findings, respond to questions, and seek direction on whether the proposal was supported. The Comité was unanimous in its decision not to support the proposal.
- (c) [P.28/2024 as amended](#), required an evaluation of the potential benefits and disbenefits of making the Youth Service a statutory service, including practical implications of such a change. Procedures to support this assessment included engagement with young people, the Youth Service and parish representatives, alongside discussions with officers with relevant legal and financial expertise.

This engagement highlighted that a statutory provision could weaken the current parish partnership model which enables locally ring-fenced contributions to supplement core funding. This risks services becoming less responsive to parish needs. Additionally, funding based on a per-head formula would not reflect variations in youth population size across the island. As a result, rural

parishes with a smaller youth population may lack sufficient resources to provide comparable provision under the proposed change.

- (d) UK legislation and practice were reviewed to inform consideration of the proposal. The risk associated with introducing a statutory provision in Jersey remain as set out in [R.59/2026](#), including reduced flexibility to respond to evolving needs and in tailoring provision to the different needs of each parish.
- (e) The Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022 requires Ministers and other duty-bearers to consider children's rights when developing policies, budgets and propositions, meaning that any future decision to reduce funding or amend the service would require consideration of the impact on children and young people, including through a Children's Rights Impact Assessment.

In addition, the [Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2024–27](#) and the [Youth Justice Roadmap](#) set out a system-wide approach to supporting the wellbeing and positive development of children and young people. Delivery of these commitments relies on the continued availability of supportive services like the youth service and sets expectations for such services to be sufficiently resourced.

This is reflected in current statutory services where the Youth Service is explicitly named as a joint delivery partner. Examples include short breaks services for children and young people with disabilities, and statutory guidance that makes explicit reference to the Youth Service's role in the delivery of wellbeing and assessment plans.