Minister for Education
and Lifelong Learning

Government of JERSEY

Union Street | St Helier
Jersey | JE2 3DN

Deputy Catherine Curtis
Chair – Children, Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Sent by email only

16 October 2025

Dear Chair,

Scrutiny Review: Proposed Budget 2026-2029

Thank you for your recent correspondence dated 9 October 2025 outlining the Panel's Review of the Proposed Budget 2026-2029. Please see the requested information below.

1. **A progress update in respect of any projects and / or workstreams agreed by the States Assembly as part of the previous Budget including:**
    a) **Where these are continuing in 2026;**
    b) **Where these have been delayed and the rationale for this; or**
    c) **Where these have been cancelled and the rationale for this.**

The revenue projects agreed in the previous budget were:

Revenue Expenditure Growth						
£'000			2025	2026	2027	2028
Head of Expenditure	Reference	Description	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Education and Lifelong Learning	I-CYP-GP25-001	Extend Nursery and Childcare Provision - CSP	1,517	2,358	3,423	4,629
Education and Lifelong Learning	I-CYP-GP25-002	School Meals - CSP	1,169	1,169	1,169	1,169
Education and Lifelong Learning	I-CYP-GP25-003	Investing in Lifelong Learning & Future Skills Provision - CSP	1,158	1,544	1,882	2,209

There was no revenue growth in 2025 to 2028 plan agreed for Children and Families. There was growth agreed in the 2 budgets prior to this which is not discussed further in this paper (Children's Improvement and Transformation Programme - £6.6m in 2023 and £1.7m in 2024.

The status of these workstreams is discussed in the sections below under the headings requested.

Extend Nursery and Childcare Provision
Substantial work has been done, and pilots remain on-going to be in a position to launch a universal offer of 15 hours term time, to all 2 to 3 year olds in 2025. This has allowed a comprehensive scheme to be costed, and the additional funding required is a proposal in the draft Budget 2026 to 2029.

School Meals
The roll-out of School Meals to all primary schools was completed in December 2024, a full review of the pilot scheme is underway ahead of a full procurement exercise to be undertaken in 2026.

Work will continue in 2026 to roll out free school meals to eligible secondary school students following a successful pilot scheme ran at Haute Vallée in 2025.

Investing in Lifelong Learning and Future Skills Provision
Effective September 2025, income thresholds which determine how much grant students receive were increased by 5.2%. These income thresholds now also apply to distance learning courses.

The new thresholds are:

- Maximum maintenance grant: £52,600 (previously £50,000)
- Maximum tuition grant: £115,720 (previously £110,000)
- Clinical component grant: £105,200 (previously £100,000)
- Interview attendance grant: £52,600 (previously £50,000)
- Specialist equipment grant (for students with a disability): £94,680 (previously £90,000)

Investing in Lifelong Learning - Enhancing grants for distance learning - Complete
Effective September 2025, the grant for distance learning was enhanced as follows:

- Maximum tuition grant increased from £7,400 to £9,535
- Maintenance grant introduced, up to £9,138
- Income thresholds for grant eligibility increased to align with campus-based students
- Grants are now calculated based on modular credit, allowing:
    - Flexible transitions between full-time and part-time study
    - Study breaks without affecting entitlement
    - Grant calculations are now automated through software, making the process faster, more accurate, and better able to handle changes in study intensity year on year

Investing in Lifelong Learning - Review of the apprenticeship scheme
A desk-based review has been completed which identified the strengths and weaknesses of the current scheme in relation to improving access to and widening options for apprenticeships.

These findings informed the focus of subsequent consultations with employers, training providers and career guidance professionals. The feedback gathered is under review and will inform policy development of a new financial support scheme.

Investing in Lifelong learning and future skills provision
The Skills Development Scheme was reviewed in January 2025, with a recommendation to prioritise funding towards identified skills gaps and commission targeted training through public tender.

In depth analysis has been completed to identify current and emerging skills gaps across sectors. This analysis combined labour market data, direct input from employers and training providers and feedback from members of Skills Jersey's mentoring and careers guidance team.

A newly constituted Skills Development Panel has finalised a shortlist of priority skill shortage areas that will be prioritised for investment:

- Childminder qualifications
- Roofing, solar panel and PV installation
- Low-carbon heating design and installation
- Health Care Assistant training

- Historic property maintenance
- Scaffolding
- Specialist culinary skills
- Data analysis

Applications will open later this year for training providers to apply to develop and deliver new courses. Once approved, these courses will be made available for employers to express interest in enrolling their staff.

Additional funding has also been applied to meet the increased costs of providing some of the apprenticeship courses at Highlands, for example increased examination and assessment costs for electricians. These changes are expected to continue as qualifications and assessment methods are modernised.

The capital projects agreed in the previous budget for CYPES were:

Capital Programme	2025	2026	2027	2028
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
- Upgrades to schools and colleges	2,000	3,000	2,000	1,474
- Education Estates Wi-Fi	840	0	0	0
- DDA Works	700	300	0	0
- Therapeutic Children's Home	750	0	0	0
- Residential Homes & Secure Settings	500	500	500	500
- Field Developments & Play Space	0	0	0	1,415
- La Passerelle	3,000	0	0	0
- Youth Services	0	0	0	1,400
- Replacement Assets and Minor Capital	300	300	300	300
Total Capital Programme Funding	**8,090**	**4,100**	**2,800**	**5,089**

In addition, £2.5m was agreed to commence work on the New Town Youth Centre under IHE.

The major upgrade to Le Squez was rescheduled to start in 2028 where there is £4.5m earmarked in the plan. **This project has been rescheduled intentionally to focus on, and dovetail with, the New Town Youth Centre.** The reprofiling is logistical and tactical to ensure there is always a Youth Centre in the town environs to accommodate young people throughout the delivery phase of both projects. It is intended to carry out minor improvement works to Le Squez in the interim until the New Town Youth Centre is open, when Le Squez will be moving into its delivery phase.

New Town Youth Centre – Ann Street
During 2025 the Town Youth Centre board have been busy working on feasibility work, building design, planning items, governance work. Below are some highlights;

- Procurement Strategy written and approved
- Room Data sheets completed with detailed specification for each room
- Updated Business Case completed and submitted
- Public consultation completed
- States Members briefing delivered
- Full Media Briefing delivered
- Planning application submitted and approved

- Purchase of land underway (hope to pass contract in Nov 2025)
- Bye-Law application submitted
- Building Contract currently being negotiated (hope to be signed in Nov 2025)

The Ann Street Youth Centre is progressing well and at the time of this letter there are many key-milestones to be achieved during 2025 so that the developer can start building works in Dec 2025 / Jan 2027. It is still planned for Belmont House (Youth Enquiry Service) to be completed in Dec 2026 and the Brew house and stores (Youth Centre) completed in early 2028.

Sale of Aviemore
Work continues to sell the Aviemore site for the development of open-market housing. The sale proceeds will be placed into a ringfenced fund for the benefit of care-experienced Islanders.

2. **An outline of any changes in policy direction or delivery for 2026 and the impact thereof.**

In 2025, the common strategic priority in respect of extending nursery and childcare provision was progressed as follows:

Review of availability of childcare spaces in St Helier
Responding to feedback from the financial sector for increased childcare capacity in St Helier, an initial review of existing Government properties in St Helier was completed. No properties were identified as being suitable for a nursery conversion at this stage.

Initial reviews of opportunities for new build / material development were discounted on the basis that capital funding had already been allocated for 2025-2028. The pilot programmes have demonstrated that school sites, with minor investment, can provide opportunities for nursery provision. Opportunities for any potential new locations or extended provisions will continue to be considered in line with current regulatory requirements should they arise.

Childcare pilots
The extended childcare pilots will continue in the academic year 2025/2026, as funded by this budget. They include:

School(s)	Pilot provision
Plat Douet, Trinity, D'Auvergne	Extended day and holiday provision – school nursery
Plat Douet	2-3 school nursery provision
D'Auvergne	Third party (JCCT) provision of 2-3 nursery from school premises

The continuation of the 2-3 provisions is consequent of clear evidence of developmental benefit to attending children and comprehensive positive feedback from parents and staff.

The extended day provisions were expected to run for 24 months given the lead time for parents to make decisions about nursery provision, informed by the extended offer.

During the first half of 2026 we will determine the future state of each of these pilots.

Early years inclusion
Additional funding has been provided, through an established grant mechanism, to the Jersey Child Care Trust (JCCT) as the principal provider of inclusion support in the private and third sector nursery sector. This increases the number of children and families that can be supported through established pathways including the Special Needs Inclusion Programme and Best Start Nursery Funding.

During quarter 4 of 2025, working with Commercial Services, we will establish a firm basis for increased provision and funding in the sector for an extended period.

Communication and language
Reflecting a significant need profile and well evidenced opportunity for early intervention, commissioning work has been completed with the paediatric therapies service within Health and Care Jersey (HCJ) to increase investment in speech and language therapy.

This scales up a successful pilot offering co-designed and delivered with Every Child Our Future, HCJ and pilot schools. The service will be developed and implemented over the course of Q4 2025 and 2026 with the ambition of covering all public, private and third sector nurseries.

CPD and training
Investment has continued in a range of Early Years CPD offers alongside delivery of formal qualifications from Highlands College. This directly benefits capacity and capability of the wider early years workforce.

Stakeholder engagement
The first parent survey was commissioned in H1 2025 and published in October 2025. This clearly established the challenges felt by parents in respect of childcare provision.

The third annual provider survey will be undertaken in Q4 2025 which will provide data on capacity, workforce and pay amongst other areas.

This formal research continues to underpin and guide policy prioritisation in the sector.

Policy direction
Each of these investments follows a clear policy direction set in the Common Strategic Policy 24 – 26, itself informed by comprehensive national and international research and stakeholder engagement.

Furthermore, the plans to implement universal childcare support for 2-3-year-olds (year prior to NEF) evidences the realisation of the CSP ambitions and strengthens the foundation of investment in early intervention, support for children and families and addresses significant affordability challenges.

A more comprehensive update on all activities summarised above will be presented by the Minister as a report to the Assembly ahead of the Budget debate in December 2025.

Children, Young People and Families

Changes to the capital programme in respect of the therapeutic home

There was a change in policy direction in respect of the creation of the therapeutic home, with a decision to move to investing in the whole children's residential estate rather than one therapeutic provision.

The new model is now built on a plan for all homes in Jersey to have one therapeutic model of practice across the whole estate. The £3.5m capital investment provided in the previous budget was returned to the Consolidated Fund for reprioritisation.

Changes to Youth Centre provision - Le Squez funding in previous Government Plans

Government Plan	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Le Squez	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**
2020–2023	250	–	2,000	2,300	–	–	–	–	–	–
2021–2024	–	250	2,000	2,300	–	–	–	–	–	–
2022–2025	–	–	–	–	2,000	2,300	–	–	–	–
2023–2026	No Funding Allocated									
2024–2027	–	–	–	–	3,500	4,000	–	–	–	–
2025–2028	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4,500	*3,000*
2026–2029	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4,500	3,000

In previous years, the policy for the provision of youth facilities focused on the upgrade of the Le Squez youth centre. In 2024, a decision was made to develop a new youth centre in town to supplement rather than simply update the existing youth service provision. This was an important policy decision in light of the significant shortfall of youth provision in St Helier which has the highest child population.

The table above shows how the timing of planned works at Le Squez have been subject to change since it first appeared in the capital programme in Government Plan 2020-2023. The story of the movements is as follows:

- The current Le Squez project was initially allocated feasibility funding of £250k for 2020 and project funding of £4.3 million (£2.0 million in 2022 and £2.3 million in 2023) in the Government Plan 2020–23. Nothing was spent in 2020.
- Government Plan 2021-24 deferred the feasibility funding and deferred project funding of £4.3 million by one year giving £2.0 million in 2022 and £2.3 million in 2023). £13k was spent on feasibility in 2021 with £237k returned to the Consolidated Fund.
- Government Plan 2022–25 did not explicitly allocate any feasibility funding. Project funding of £4.3 million was retained but deferred to £2.0 million in 2024 and £2.3 million in 2025.
- Government Plan 2023-26 the project was omitted.
- Government Plan 2024–27, project funding was re-instated and increased to £7.5m (£3.5 million in 2024 and £4.0 million in 2025).
- There as spend of £3k in 2024 on the project.
- Budget 2025-28 deferred project funding of £7.5 million (£4.5 million in 2028 and (not visible as off the plan) £3.0 million in 2029.
- Budget 2026-29 has retained funding of £7.5 million (£4.5 million in 2028 and £3.0 million in 2029.

3. **a) An outline of any changes to staff posts and restructuring within your department and the anticipated resultant savings and impact on service delivery; and**

Education and Lifelong Learning

The table below shows the savings target and planned areas for delivery in respect of Education and Lifelong Learning:

Education and Lifelong Learning, VFM savings to be delivered	2025 Target	2026 Target	2027 Target	2028 Target
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'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**

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

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

Children, Young People and Families

The table below shows the savings target and planned areas for delivery:

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**

b) Details about the efficiencies and other savings made in 2025 and how these were achieved.

For Children's Social Care, 2025 has been focused on reviewing the governance and organisational structures of the service, but there hasn't been any significant restructuring in Children's Services. There has been some service realignment and role changes, as well as removing some vacancies from the structure. The Intensive Integrated Youth Service (IIYS) was transferred into the wider Multi-Disciplinary Service, which allowed 3 vacancies to be removed to ensure better configuration with the new model.

In 2026, it is proposed that the review undertaken into the recruitment and retention of Residential Child Care Officers (RCCOs) during 2025 will be taken forward. This may result in an improvement in pay and conditions for staff. This is reflected as growth in the Budget proposal and does not result in financial savings. This proposal is awaiting approval through the budget setting process in December.

Children Young People and Family Services have undertaken zero based budgeting exercises across the department to prioritise each year's activities within the cash limit, including delivery of value for money (VFM) savings target.

VFM achieved on a recurrent basis	Total
12 x posts	£1,237,000
2024 Growth reduction - Children's Social Care Reform (New Homes)	£340,000
2024 Growth Reduction – Investment across CYPES Frontline Services	£109,000
2024 Growth Reduction – Investment in YP Workforce Participation	£77,000
Total Achieved	**£1,763,000**

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Rob Ward
Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

Connétable Richard Vibert
Minister for Children and Families