



Common Strategic Policy Review Panel

Public Hearing

Witness: The Chief Minister

Thursday, 6th November 2025

Panel:

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North (Chair)

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade

Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central

Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity

Witnesses:

Deputy L.J. Farnham of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter - The Chief Minister

Deputy I.J. Gorst of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter - Assistant Chief Minister

Mr. P. Wylie - Chief Officer, Cabinet Office

Mr. J. Whitfield - Chief Information Officer, Digital Services

Mr. R. Bell - Treasurer of the States

[12:32]

Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North: (Chair):

Welcome to the public hearing with Common Strategic Policy Scrutiny Review Panel. We will have questions with the Chief Minister today. We will question about funding and policy decisions that are aligned with the Common Strategic Policy, the delivery, how it was co-ordinated across the departments, what are the risks that have been identified and managed. Before we start with the questions, as usual we will do introductions. Deputy Inna Gardiner, President of the Scrutiny Liaison Committee and Chair of the panel.

Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

Deputy Hilary Jeune, Chair of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade:

Deputy Montfort Tadier, Chair of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour:

Deputy Louise Doublet, Chair of the Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

Deputy Lucy Stephenson, the Vice-Chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel, and the Chair sends her apologies.

The Chief Minister:

Deputy Lyndon Farnham, Chief Minister.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Ian Gorst, Assistant Chief Minister.

Treasurer of the States:

Richard Bell, Treasurer.

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

Paul Wylie, Chief Officer at the Cabinet Office.

Chief Information Officer, Digital Services:

Jason Whitfield, Chief Information Officer.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you. Chief Minister, we will start with a very general question. Would you please tell us how your cross-government leadership contributed directly to the delivery of the 13 Common Strategic Policy priorities?

The Chief Minister:

I think I have been absolutely clear from the time we formed the Government - which could be described as a coalition government because I think we needed to rebuild and find some unity - we have worked extremely hard to build a political consensus. I think that has been done through a number of reasons but largely through, I think, a good government structure, a focus on not only our

Council of Ministers meetings but the Ministerial groups. We have also held a number of Ministerial workshops dealing with the big issues from C.S.P. (Common Strategic Policy) to budgeting. Also, the ... sorry, I have lost track.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

You mentioned Ministerial groups. Would you please state what Ministerial groups do you have?

The Chief Minister:

I had a list somewhere. They are all published on the website. Okay, here we are, here are some: Emergencies Council, Regeneration Steering Group, the Cost of Living Ministerial Group, the Gas Ministerial Group, the Housing ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Just a minute, so Regeneration Steering Group, yes.

The Chief Minister:

Yes. The Cost of Living Ministerial Group, the Gas Ministerial Group, the Housing and Work Advisory Group, Ports Policy Ministerial Group, the Legislation Advisory Panel, not so much a Ministerial group but an important aspect of advising Government, the Safeguarding Ministerial Group, Sports and Physical Activity Ministerial Group. I was going to say before as well as the Ministerial workshops, as you all know because you all participated, we have had a number of full States Member workshops as well focusing on the bigger challenges. On top of that, we have informal Ministerial meetings on a regular basis where we discuss in a Ministerial-only environment all aspects of the work that is going on.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

When I am looking through the Common Strategic Policy 13 priorities, would you please provide a breakdown of which priorities receive funding to be delivered and which priorities did not receive extra funding and needed to find the delivery of the priority within existing budgets?

The Chief Minister:

Well, as far as I am aware, all of the priorities have received the required budgeting to deliver on the C.S.P.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Because when we had the public hearing with Ministers the previous week, and again we might need to follow up with a written question to get the clarity, so for example the Minister for the Environment said that reform of the planning service to get Jersey building we needed to find within

our budget, we did not receive this extra budget and we needed, for example, water strategy. So they needed to do reprioritisation. So they did not receive extra budget for what is in the Common Strategic Policy.

The Chief Minister:

Well, I think ... I am not sure that a water strategy is relevant to the Common Strategic Policy.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

No, no, no. No, what I mean, each department has their business as usual. They had their work programme. When the Common Strategic Policy was discussed, the Common Strategic Policy what else would be delivered, this is why my question was ... so, for example, we know that extension childcare provider received extra funding because it was not part of their business as usual. So in this case when you formalised the Common Strategic Policy, was it clear that whatever you are bringing as part of the Common Strategic Policy would require extra budget or you were thinking this is part of business as usual budget that departments ... was it discussion between Ministers when you formalised the ...?

The Chief Minister:

All of the common strategic priorities were at the forefront of our budgeting. So right through the budget debate we focused upon making sure all of these priorities were sufficiently funded.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Chair, can I just ask ... I think it is a supplementary. Is there a sense in which too much onus was put on individual Ministers to come forward with bids so that ... and if that was the case, is there a risk that actually a strategic overview of the important aspects that needed to be funded maybe fell by the ...?

The Chief Minister:

I do not think so. I think soon after coming to office we realised this Government ... I realised after a couple of months that the cost of running the public sector was unsustainable. I have said that repeatedly and time and time again, which is why when we came to the budgeting process, we were quite clear that we were not going to accept unsolicited growth bids but we were going to focus on Common Strategic Policies. If there were requirements of any growth outside of that, then a strong case had to be made. That is different to how we have done it before. Before we would say it is almost open season, fill your boots, come with all the growth bids and then we will debate it. But we did it in a more structured way this year. We have 11 - well, the 13 with the environment strategic priorities - because we felt we could deliver those within the 2-year period we had of the Government.

Deputy M. Tadier:

We did have a Minister, for example, who said that: "In hindsight, I felt that I was a bit naïve because I should have maybe put bids in that I did not and there were strong advocates from other departments banging the table for their departments." It almost felt like the one who shouted loudest was getting the money. Is there a risk that that happened?

The Chief Minister:

No, I do not think so. There is nothing to stop ... I mean, I have regular and constructive discourse with Ministers all the time. There is nothing to stop Ministers coming back at any time if they have a problem or a challenge or circumstances meant they want to change policy or change direction. They can come back at any time and we would go straight to Council of Ministers and we can have that debate again.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

But, Chief Minister, maybe there is an addition to that about ... these are Common Strategic Policies. Obviously, you have the risks in the wider areas that maybe cannot be planned for, and we are hearing regularly that now there are no budgets ... there is no movement in any budgets or even in the future draft budget at the moment for contingency planning. So it will always be there will be this issue where they will have to make very big choices on these particular cuts on things that have to be done. So that comes back to ... and I think we have specifically seen that in our Scrutiny Panel around the Minister for the Environment saying he has been unable ... he will be unable to deliver areas of the work that he is statutorily obliged to do, areas that are imposed on him like Brexit reset negotiations. How does this fit within the common strategic priorities because, of course, none of these that I have just mentioned are particularly in the common strategic priorities but are absolutely necessary for a modern Government to work and function?

The Chief Minister:

I have regular conversations with the Minister for the Environment. I spoke to him only yesterday. We were discussing our approach to these scrutiny hearings. Like every Minister, I think every Minister would want more budget if they could have it to focus on what they would like to do. I am not aware that we are not able to deliver any of our regulatory functions due to budgetary constraints, and it is up to each Minister to decide with their budgets how they allocate it within their department. We know - I think it has been mentioned - that the Environment budget from 2021 has almost doubled. It has gone from £5 million to £11.1 million which is proposed for 2026. That is a significant increase. I also think we need to ... and the Minister for the Environment who is responsible for regulation knows this because we have regular conversations. In actual fact, when I asked him if he would consider being Minister, he asked me what I was expecting, and the key areas were to improve the planning service, reduce planning fees and reduce regulation wherever possible to

make life easier for Islanders and the economy. I think he has done a great job to date but, of course, he as every Minister would like to go further. But we have this juxtaposition. We know that we have presented a good, balanced budget for 2026. As Deputy Gorst was referring to earlier, it is a bridging budget, really. It draws a line in the sand. It starts bearing down on expenditure but it also recognises that we have to make big changes. So in one breath we are saying we have to cut back on expenditure, and then we have the juxtaposition of Ministers and other States Members saying: "We want more for this and more for that". Tough decisions to be made ahead.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

The Minister for Children and Families has acknowledged that previous funding for children's services was spent ad hoc and not always in the best way. Given the scale of investment in recent years, what mechanisms are in place to ensure that future funding is properly planned, monitored and delivers measurable outcomes for children and families? That is particularly because children is the first Island outcome in the C.S.P.

The Chief Minister:

I am going to have to ... I know you like Ministers to answer. I am going to have to refer to the Treasurer to explain the disciplines that are used in controlling departmental expenditure.

Treasurer of the States:

So in terms of controlling that spend and, in particular, in the first year of spend, that money agreed by the Assembly can only be spent on the aims for which it is purposed. Ideally, in the long term what you would have is you have your business case at the start of it.

[12:45]

You have a set of K.P.I.s (key performance indicators) against which you are to perform, and it is for each area working with their Minister to look to see what benefits are delivered against that business case. That is the norm. We certainly do not have the resources to be all over the top of that, but that is the expectation in terms of showing what benefits are realised for the expenditure that is there. It is fair to say that getting more rigour within it, it is more difficult when you have a really long-term business case, if you like, for years of revenue spend, firstly to identify who are the people who were in place when they put that plan in place to look to accountability, but secondly, to see what has happened in the meantime. I would say that most of that investment that has been made should link back to the Future Jersey outcomes and make contributions towards those. There are some very key ones, particularly in Education, that you can measure over time, and within Health. So that is the framework broadly around which initiatives should be assessed.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

So internally departments have their own, I think, dashboard to measure things and outcomes, do they not? How often do those insights go further? How often do they come to Ministers, for example, to have that oversight as well?

Treasurer of the States:

There is policy, which probably goes ... and I will be corrected as I go with Paul, but a key point in time is when a new Government comes in place. You would be looking at priorities. You would be looking to see how the previous term of office ... and by that I mean an Assembly term of office, what has changed in that timeframe. Have the programmes that have been in place contributed? Were they expected to contribute in the timeframe to make the changes on what are, after all, very long-term indicators? That is a key point in time in terms of identifying the policy options and the priorities for an incoming Government. I guess Paul will go further if I have not covered that off.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

We will move to the next one, I think, yes.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you. In terms of this theme of budget allocations and whether they flow from a coherent strategy across government, we heard from the Treasury, at the hearing with the Minister for Treasury and Resources, this morning that individual Ministers sent their bids in to Treasury and there were no joint bids from any Ministers. Indeed, some of the groups that he mentioned, Chief Minister, including the social determinants of health group, which includes the Ministers for Children, Housing and Social Security, I believe that group has not yet met. The cost of living group had not met for well over a year into your Government. What have you learnt from your time as Chief Minister that you think could be improved in terms of the budget allocations flowing from a central strategy and joint working around that?

The Chief Minister:

I have learnt that it is far more important to have robust debate around the Council of Ministers table and in Ministerial groups rather than having partisan majorities trying to push policy and strategy through. This Government is much more representative. It is by nature a consensus Government. As the Ministerial Code said, we are bound by that code to bring policy and decisions to Council of Ministers and have robust debate. What I have also learnt is that Ministers have been particularly supportive, even when they are on the wrong side of a decision that Council of Ministers have made, to support that and go with it. We have seen lots of examples of that and I think while we do not always agree ... and I always say disagreement is good because when we do not agree we are forced to have much deeper and unfortunately much longer debates about things. But when we

come to a consensus we stick to it. That was something I did not think we would ever get to, so I have learnt that spending the time to debate things more deeply ... and even if you disagree, when you make a decision, we stick to it as a group. That has seen us through to date very well.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Is that strictly true in terms of ... we see a lot of votes where the Council of Ministers is split, so what is the decision making? You take a vote at council and even if you disagree, then there is ...?

The Chief Minister:

So we take a vote at council and the majority wins. We are quite often unanimous. When there are disagreements, it is normally 2 or 3. We do not have many split decisions, but when we do we set up ... part of the leadership sort of approach we have taken is we have an agreed vote where the Government will stick to that vote. We have a free vote, which are on issues such as elections or assisted dying. Then we have something called an agreement to differ. So if a Minister feels strongly about something and cannot support it, they note they are going to agree to differ when it comes to the States debate. So there are no surprises. We are all notified of that. We have seen that in practice and that works well.

Deputy M. Tadier:

That will happen in the budget, no doubt. There will be amendments that come forward that ...

The Chief Minister:

We are not sure yet. At the moment we are pretty aligned on everything. Of course, there are questions. There are 2 or 3 I think Assistant Ministers who are ... the jury is out in relation to the reduction in supplementation to the Social Security Fund and we are having those conversations now. Of course, we will approach every single amendment with an open mind because it is important. I want to make this absolutely clear. We are not dying in the ditch over our budget. We have put down what we think is the best option for the next 12 months, given the challenges in the longer term, and we will be open-minded, as I am sure you found us all the way through, to amendments.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I will go back to the cross-departmental work and your role as the Chief Minister in co-ordinating policies touching across the departments. We had examples from last week. For example, the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development has acknowledged there is no economic targets or projections that have been developed to assess the impact of the proposed 15 hours nursery provision. At the same time, the Minister for Social Security and the Minister for Education talked how it can be delivered between 2 departments. So when we are hearing this and in the hindsight

if we are looking back, do you believe there needs to be maybe a central function within the Government which is responsible for assessing cross-cutting impacts of the policy proposal? Because it can actually benefit the wider economy, not just before it is reaching to the Council of Ministers and the Assembly.

The Chief Minister:

Well, we try and do that with Ministerial groups but we could perhaps have more ... I am mindful that if we have too many Ministerial groups it is just not productive. So we generally use the Council of Ministers for that. I think you could probably, if you go back and examine our agendas and minutes, you will find we have a lot of agenda items, from the big policy items to sort of other items that might not ordinarily feature. I encourage all Ministers if they are unsure to bring it to Council of Ministers. In addition to that, underpinning the political direction is the Executive Leadership Team, where there is significant cross-cutting work. The Executive Leadership Team meet regularly, more than monthly, I believe, where officers are discussing and working closely on the vast majority of issues we have identified.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

But would you agree, for example ... I understand that, but would you agree in hindsight again if we are looking at extending nursery it is under children but when we did have representation it has always been we have children going to nursery and it is benefiting children but it also can benefit the economy. Would it be right that this policy would develop with 2 Ministers coming together, obviously each one developing the policy within their department, but this crossover that has overarching benefits for the public?

The Chief Minister:

In that particular instance, I go back to when we were formulating the Common Strategic Policy, when there was cross-cutting, when every single Minister agreed and supported the extension of nursery care. It was discussed with business at that time through the Chamber of Commerce. I even remember talking about it in Chamber of Commerce meetings, Chamber of Commerce ... so all of that work ... and that was very well supported. The business sectors want ... we have had meetings. We had meetings at the time, Deputy Gorst and I, when we were talking about the Pillar 3 taxation and we spoke to the big taxpayers. They said they wanted to see some of our tax being used to facilitate people in the workplace, helping with nursery, helping with fees, education. So all of those conversations were held back then.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

But what would you suggest maybe for the next iteration of the Common Strategic Policy? Because, okay, you have the Common Strategic Policy; we are always learning the lessons. What would you

add or suggest to the next Common Strategic Policy that would come based on your experience how to co-ordinate these cross-cutting areas?

The Chief Minister:

I have always encouraged, as I always have done, and before in previous lives as Minister, Assistant Minister, as collaborative working as possible. I always say to Ministers, Assistant Ministers, not just between ... but between Ministers and their Assistant Ministers, try and talk to each other, no surprises. There is lots of business as usual going on and quite often Ministers will deliver business as usual, relatively minor items. We cannot expect to talk to everything and everyone, but I would reiterate ... and there has been some examples where if you are not sure, you are undecided, seek the support and advice of fellow Ministers. So I think we are doing that well but we can always ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

But who needs to provide and drive this from the leadership perspective? Is it an officer level or it is the Chief Minister level or Deputy Chief Minister level or it is each Minister responsible for herself, himself, to drive this collaboration?

The Chief Minister:

I would say every single States Member who is elected by the public has a duty of leadership.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

No, but you have the Common Strategic Policy. We are talking about collaboration across within your Common Strategic Policy.

The Chief Minister:

Okay, I am leading to that. So that is my first point. I think we all have a duty to do that. In relation to the Common Strategic Policy and how we put that together, I think where it helps us put that together, we were focused on things that we could deliver, were realistic. We did not have a list of 100 things to deliver in 100 days and that kind of thing. We focused on the things we could get over the line in the remaining time we had left. So that was the driver.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Back to measuring outcomes, I am afraid, Chief Minister, we know that the Council of Ministers receive I think quarterly updates on the progress of items in the C.S.P. How is this Government showing Islanders that Government is delivering on those commitments?

The Chief Minister:

Well, I think the results have materialised in tangible ways; for example, the reduction in G.P. (general practitioner) fees, the work on extending childcare, the school lunches, which was a piece of work we finished off from the previous Government and that has been very successful. I think the others generally speak for themselves. We have kept our fees and duties and charges as low as possible. We have provided more affordable homes for Islanders through the step-up scheme. So basically the tangible evidence is in what has been delivered. In relation to how that is monitored for the quarterly updates, I will have to ask Paul to tell you that because he is responsible for that.

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

What you would have known from the ... the smaller communications directorate that we now have is a concerted programme of communicating the C.S.P.s throughout the year. So each month is a different theme and, as the Chief Minister said, several of them as they were delivered, that is about telling Islanders and reminding them on things like school meals. Others in terms of building the hospital, for example, it is as and when there is a relevant fork in the ground. We have been very clear that, yes, we have to deliver but to your point, we also need to be telling Islanders on progress and that is a proactive campaign.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Is that a new campaign or has that been an ongoing ...?

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

Been going on the whole time.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Okay. Thank you. Then linking it to this proposed budget, how does this budget ensure the delivery of the C.S.P. priorities and that they are sustainable and make a lasting impact beyond 2026, regardless of what happens at the next election and who the next Government may be?

The Chief Minister:

Well, because the funding required to maintain the progress in the C.S.P. has been included in the departmental budgets.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

For future years?

The Chief Minister:

Well, so for next year ... at the moment ... this is why I think we need perhaps to go back to 3-year budgeting. At the moment we produce a budget for next year and then we produce estimates for following that. But we know if we look back, those estimates tend to change every year as we adopt the budget, so they are in next year's budget and then, of course, depending on the route we take, whether we go to 3-year budgeting or we stick with the forecasting programme, then they would be reinstated in the following year, in the following budget, depending on the Government. You could argue that having a one-year fixed budget as opposed to a 3-year fixed budget is better in a year coming up to an election because you could have a completely different Government next year and they can start from their position.

[13:00]

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Chief Minister, we will, I am sure, come on to the Social Security Fund later on, but do you have ... given your answer there and the question about sustainable funding for the C.S.P. priorities, do you have any concerns that the funding as proposed in this budget is effectively coming from a temporary source from the fund? We keep being told by Ministers that it is a temporary solution but it is to fund ongoing investment in C.S.P. priorities.

The Chief Minister:

The cost of the public sector is of great concern the way it has grown exponentially to, I think, all of us. We have never made any ... said anything else, and we have been watching that carefully. That alone has led us to deliver the budget for 2026, which balances the books, it does not impact on the front-line services that we need to maintain, but it does rely upon a reduction in the grant to the Social Security Fund. There are a number of reasons it was recommended that we could do that, not least because of the growth we have seen in the fund itself. I am looking for my figures here. Here we are, yes. So in 2006 the forecast of that fund, it would expire in 2034 and it would reach 4.7 times the annual spend. It was those sort of forecasts that led to the formulas that have ... what I would say has led the taxpayer to put in more supplementation than it needed to. In 2021 the forecast was that the fund would expire in 2026 and would reach over 7 times the annual spend, and that is roughly the position we find ourselves in now. So to be clear, this is a plan that deals with ... that balances the books for next year, okay, and allows this Government and the next Government time to consider how we address that. The way we address that will be a mixture of further efficiency savings ...

Treasurer of the States:

Just to clarify, in 2066.

The Chief Minister:

2066. What did I say?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

2026.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Started to worry there.

The Chief Minister:

Okay. Just a very quick 10 seconds. We are going to have to look at taxation. We are going to have to look at revenues. We are going to have to look at more efficiencies, further tax cuts ...

Deputy M. Tadier:

Or growing the economy, presumably.

The Chief Minister:

... and economic growth, yes. It will be a blend of all of that.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Chief Minister, you have mentioned several times and it has been talked about a lot about the big growth in the public sector and this is something that needs to be curbed, but we see the figures. The main figures are within Health and Education being the big chunk of where that growth has been. How does that balance when we see the common strategic priorities, and, of course, they all weigh differently. There are some that are easier in a way to deliver than others. Reducing G.P. fees is more of a change in negotiations than it is about delivering a hospital. Delivering a new hospital, of course, potentially, depending on how big it is, could increase the amount of public ... it will potentially be a bigger hospital and will need more staff to run it and to provide the services within it. Potentially, that could mean a growth in Health human resources. So how does that balance when we have that narrative of an increased public sector? It seems to be within Health and Education and then the common strategic priorities do in a way make sure that there is an increase because you have the extended nursery and childcare provision, which would mean more staff potentially in the schools and the state school system to support those nursery provisions, for example, for the hospital and ... so how does this balance out?

The Chief Minister:

So again, as we have always said or tried to say, it is about reprioritisation of how we spend our money. We have seen reductions in staff right across a number of core departments, but we have

seen a net increase because we have ... thank you, Paul. So, Cabinet Office, Department for the Economy, Digital Services, Employment, Social Security, People Services, all have seen a reduction in senior management. We have increased children and young people education by 75, healthcare by 234. We have reinvested that money in front-line staff, nurses, doctors, teachers, teaching assistants, which we had not done in past years. We had allowed an imbalance. So part of that is addressing that. So we need a smaller Government, a smaller centre. We need to reinvest money in the front lines but we have to try, instead of having a net ... we have seen a very slight net increase as we adjust. We need to manage that so we can see a net decrease.

Deputy M. Tadier:

It is also about the wage bill, presumably, not just numbers of employees. It is about the affordability. I suppose the flip side of that - we will get to it later - is the cost of living. It is a very fine equation, presumably, is it, in terms of economic growth, cost of living and affordability?

The Chief Minister:

We had an adjustment ... well, we managed to just make the finishing step. The previous Government were very close to it. We inherited a teachers' strike but we resolved that fairly quickly. We had to ... with the pay deal with the public sector there were years where the public sector pay had fallen below inflation, so with the cost of living deal, with the 1 per cent increase, that has put everything back on track. So by the end of this term the public sector and all public sector employees, that situation has been resolved. So really the headcount where we invest our resources is really important. I think we should focus on the front lines and I think we need to go a lot further in reducing management layers.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Chief Minister, I know that we touched about the Social Security Fund, but talking about back 2025, because in this budget you are requesting extra £50 million to meet unexpected spending in 2025. From my understanding, this £50 million for 2025 ... because we had less income than we expected, the inflation was high, it means that the pay for the staff, for the public service, was higher than you predicted and obviously the overspend in Health. So after improving the budget we are having now an extra £50 million requested to reducing grant. What assurance can you tell that £70-plus million reducing grant in 2026 will not turn into £100 million request the year after?

The Chief Minister:

Based upon our year to date figures and our constant re-estimating and forecasting, we have arrived at the best position. I think there can be no guarantees in this unstable world. What we have learnt is, and as the Treasurer said earlier, we have become I think a lot more focused on discipline around the expenditure in budgets.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

But this is why I am asking, because the 2025 budget is the budget was proposed, the budget was approved by the Assembly. It has never come back to the Assembly that actually we are overspending, we need an extra £50 million to balance the book in 2025 because of the circumstances, and we just received it now. So I assume it is something coming into the Common Strategic Policy priorities as well to cover because it is Health and it is other things. So for us if it is discipline I think the public would like to have a reassurance. We had a cut of £10 million but now we are actually cutting £60 million for 2025 and going forward. So this is where ... how sustainable it is going forward.

The Chief Minister:

I think it is sustainable. I think it relies upon strict controls. We have to understand there are influences and actions outside of our control that affect us, such as the underlying rate of inflation globally has had a massive impact on the cost of health supplies, health services, that are provided to the Island. It has also had an impact upon the state of the economy. The global economy has had an impact upon taxation and business performance. The important thing is we just keep as tight a control as we possibly can, and I think we have seen that improve significantly. I would hope the Treasurer, although he is very careful and quite rightly cautious, feels more confident in relation to our forecasts, given the caveat that nothing is ever guaranteed.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

So in terms of the public sector overspending, which the Fiscal Policy Panel has described as not prudent, Chief Minister, you have described the solutions to that will be a combination of growth and some savings and possibly revenue raising. But why has this Government not tackled this question of where the solutions lie on those 3 options?

The Chief Minister:

I think we have. Firstly, the F.P.P. (Fiscal Policy Panel) report was not all bad, there were some really positive points in there. It talked about our strong financial services sector, our resilient tax revenues, our commitment to capital investment through the Investing in Jersey programme, our recognition of inflationary risks, which we are dealing with in our forecasting, focus on health forecasting, the complete health review, and the reality based around what we are dealing with with the underlying rate of inflation in the provision of health, and our efficiency saving targets. Those were all highlighted as very positive moves. Then I am very pleased that they highlighted the

unsustainability of the public sector model at the moment, but that is something we cannot fix in a year. It is something that is going to take years to do.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Is there a plan that will take us across the bridge, as it were, in terms of whether it is growth cuts or revenue raising?

The Chief Minister:

This is what we have been doing with the Ministerial workshops, with the States Members' workshops, focusing on all the big issues. We have a final workshop in February where we tie all that together and then this Government will present - hopefully with the support of the States because it is the States Members' workshops that will point us in the right direction - a blueprint, a plan for moving forward, which we will leave on the table for the next Assembly and the next Government.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Can you give us an idea of what might be in that?

The Chief Minister:

We are working on it now, but I go back to what I said and what Deputy Gorst said before. We are going to have to look at more efficiencies. We are going to have to look at reprioritising services, where we reprioritise spend between the centre and front-line services. We are going to have to look at our tax structures. We are going to have to look at revenues, whether we can explore other revenues, and we are going to have to, I think, importantly look at the economy and growing the economy. It will be a blend of all that, but because it is a work in progress we cannot tell you that.

Deputy M. Tadier:

What tax structures do you think you will need to look at?

The Chief Minister:

I am not sure. We made it clear when we came into government we were not going to increase taxation, but we have to look at the services we need to supply into the future. We need to understand whether our levels of taxation are appropriate. I think they are. I think we should not need to change taxation. I think what we have works well, but there is a debate on progressive tax and regressive tax. Thank goodness, at the end of the day, while I was not keen at the time on G.S.T. (goods and services tax), that has been absolutely important. We might look at how we distribute that. We could look at revenues, for example. We have hundreds if not thousands of

electric cars driving around that are not paying road tax at the moment. There are all sorts of options to consider but there is no easy answer.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Chief Minister, one of the C.S.P. areas was also about the ageing population. How is the Government ensuring the implications of the ageing population are fully embedded across the Common Strategic Policies, so it is not just healthcare but it is across economic, housing and infrastructure? How are these taken into consideration?

The Chief Minister:

I think that was part of the incentive for the Investing in Jersey programme and it is part of Deputy Gardiner's P.50 proposition. We have underinvested in infrastructure because we have not rigorously protected it. A key part of our Investing in Jersey plans are the provision of additional sheltered housing for the elderly and so forth. So that is our predominant position.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Is there a particular working group that is working on this or is there specific strategic leadership that looks at it from this angle?

The Chief Minister:

At the moment the Investing in Jersey proposals are in. We are providing ... there is law drafting going on around the investment fund once that is approved, if it is approved. We do not want to take the States for granted. If that is all approved as part of the budget, then we move to the next stage of how we manage that. I think every Government that comes in has to look at its Ministerial portfolios, and we might see some changes, I would think, in the next Government and we perhaps need to put more Ministerial focus on infrastructure and ageing population.

[13:15]

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Demographics is under your remit, Chief Minister, so what workstreams do you specifically work on under ageing population? Is there something that you particularly work on in this area?

The Chief Minister:

Most of my work in this area has been based around the Investing in Jersey strategy and the healthcare spend. I think also areas about how we might use technology, that is part of the increase in the health budget and how they want to use that to benefit health, social inclusion.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Minister, just to ... because the C.S.P. says: "We will make preparations for our projected demographic changes, including our ageing population, falling birth rate and rising levels of disability, to ensure sustainability of our health provisions ... economic prosperity." So it was just trying to find out where yourself fits in with that workstream and the preparations for that happening.

The Chief Minister:

Okay. So you mean outside of the ageing well roadmap type thing. You are talking more of the fiscal sort of ...

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Well, it is still within the ageing population, I think. This focuses on that demographic change which we know is going towards an ageing population.

The Chief Minister:

When we refer to ageing population, it is well-being, ageing well roadmap provision, facilities, services, infrastructure for that. But of course the other challenge, the economic challenge, is the impact of tax revenues from an ageing population, shrinking workforce, falling birth rate.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I will ask you the same question that I asked previously of the Minister for Treasury and Resources. I think what we are hinting at, that is completely right, that is very good that you have the infrastructure investment, but it is one part. The other part is the health provision, what will the ageing population demographic change require. There is a different arrangement for the social security, pension plus, and so on support that you have. We are talking about this demographic change that is coming across several departments. As in the Common Strategic Policy, we will make preparation, which will include economic prosperity and health provision, not just infrastructure. What we are trying to understand: do you have a cross-government workstream that is bringing all these departments together and, if not, do you think it is something that needs to happen in the next Government?

The Chief Minister:

We do that through the H.A.W.A.G. (Housing and Work Advisory Group) plus group, as we call it, where we are looking at all demographics, all economic aspects of those demographics. I think there needs to be a lot more synergy between that. We tend to look at them in isolation at the moment. I think there is a blending of that. So, of course, that work is being done through H.A.W.A.G.-plus and H.A.W.A.G. with the population policy work.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Do they discuss health policy and health provision for the ageing population within this group?

The Chief Minister:

Absolutely, they do, yes.

Deputy M. Tadier:

We touched on it earlier, some questions about the cost of living. Is tackling cost of living issues still a priority for your Government?

The Chief Minister:

I think it is the biggest priority but also probably the most difficult to grapple with, given the levers we have at our disposal. That will be a big part of the plan we put before the Assembly, our end of term report, if you like, as we head into the next elections. I think the biggest problem or one of the biggest problems or concerns for Islanders at the moment is about the affordability of living. It is not unique to Jersey; we are seeing it all over the western world, basically. You would have paid particular interest to the result of the New York mayor elections. That was a key. Big cities are facing all these problems. That is something we are grappling with, but it is high on the agenda and we are determined to keep working on that.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Chief Minister, it is not a question on the paper but are you concerned about the knock-on effect that the lack of a joint tender process has had on food prices in the Island? Presumably, it was ...

The Chief Minister:

I am not overly so because, based on the advice we have received, I think the good economic advice and the calculations we have seen, food inflation, the vast majority of food inflation, is not related to the cost of freight. I do not have the percentages in front of me. I think we have more work to do on how the food gets from the ship to the shelf and that ...

Deputy M. Tadier:

I do not want to dwell on it, but it is presumably much more expensive for a boat to run to one island than to 2, less lucrative.

The Chief Minister:

Well, the economies of scale will always apply, but when you go to 2 islands you have 2 sets of port charges. You have more logistics. You require more crew, more facilities. Arguably, a ship coming from A to B and B to A and A to B could be more productive, but I do not know what the current

freight levels are in Guernsey and how that works out. What I do know is that DFDS have produced a business plan and have signed an agreement that commits them to investing £300 million in new ships. Whichever way we do it, it is still a lucrative business.

Deputy M. Tadier:

In terms of other parts of the economy, the business tendency survey shows that 54 per cent of businesses identify as having staff or skills shortages as one of their main constraints. Is there something that can be done in the C.S.P. to address these risks?

The Chief Minister:

Well, there is lifelong learning. The Minister, Deputy Ward, was very keen to emphasise with the change of his department, Education and Lifelong Learning, because we recognise the potential for not keeping up and offering the skills and training development. Again, we have had a number of events, major events, happen over the years, from COVID to Brexit, that has led to a completely different makeup of our workforce, which has made it more challenging to deliver that cohesively. But it is still a high priority for the Minister.

Deputy M. Tadier:

In terms of the joined-up thinking, if we think about immigrant labour into Jersey, often the term used is unskilled labour but actually within the unskilled labour market, so-called, there are a lot of skills that are there. There is a lot of education that has gone into bringing people to Jersey. Do you think that there is enough being done between the different departments to make sure that skills, especially when they are imported skills, are being met, being matched up with the right jobs?

The Chief Minister:

I have been particularly impressed with the work between Education, Economy and Highlands College. I spent a morning up there recently and was completely surprised, very pleasantly surprised, at the level of support and training that is given there. But yes, could we always do more? Of course we can always do more. I do not think there is any such thing really as an unskilled job. I think every job requires an element of skill.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Can I also ask about where digital figures into the lifelong learning strategy? Do you accept that improving digital skills is fundamental to the Island's future?

The Chief Minister:

I think it is absolutely essential. Just about everything all of us do all the time is digitally based now.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Okay. So regarding the proposed investment in the budget, what emphasis is being given to maintaining core digital infrastructure versus investing in innovation and transformation; so, for example, A.I. (artificial intelligence) automation and so on? Is that something that this budget focuses on?

The Chief Minister:

We have 2 approaches to that. We have the internal approach about how we are introducing A.I. and improving digital skills within the public service to make us more productive. If you want to ask any questions, Jason can give commentary on that, but we can provide you with more information on that. Then through our investment via the Economy Department we are working with Digital Jersey. I know there has been some interesting discourse about A.I. but where I am encouraged is the vast majority of businesses, especially the larger businesses, are investing heavily in technology and A.I. We need to provide I think more support where required to the smaller businesses and sole traders in the conversations we have to have.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Chief Minister, thank you for your extensive answers. My question: would you be able to give us an extra 10 minutes?

The Chief Minister:

Of course I can.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you.

The Chief Minister:

I will make my answers less extensive.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Can I ask a final question, Chair, on digital?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Absolutely, yes.

The Chief Minister:

I should check with my colleagues.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I will not use up all the 10 minutes. Just a final question in this area: is there a risk that when it comes to digital skills and upskilling that either there is duplication going on between Government, for example, and Digital Jersey or actually perhaps also likely that digital skills fall between 2 stools and that there might be areas where neither is really picking up the demand or latent demand in the economy?

The Chief Minister:

I have not seen any evidence of that because digital skill training is of such high importance to the economy, the vast majority of businesses prioritise it and the vast majority of training is carried out in-house. So it does not mean we do not need to provide more, and again we look to Digital Jersey for that and again they need to ...

Deputy M. Tadier:

That is fine if you are already in a job, but what about if we are talking about reskilling for the people without the skills who maybe want to move into digital jobs later on in life? How do they go about retraining?

The Chief Minister:

They would look for training through the private sector, through Highlands College, which is subsidised, of course, in certain areas.

Deputy M. Tadier:

You are confident that the funding is sufficient in that area?

The Chief Minister:

At the moment I am. I do not know if Jason can add anything to that, if you can do it quickly.

Chief Information Officer, Digital Services:

Yes, I am pleased to. So as part of the I.T. (information technology) strategy that we presented to a number of committees, one of the key initiatives is a skills academy. That will definitely pull on the areas that you are talking to from outside of government, from inside of government, people who want to transfer in to develop digital skills. We are doing that in alignment with all the planning for A.I.

Deputy M. Tadier:

So that is nothing to do with Digital Jersey, that is separate?

Chief Information Officer, Digital Services:

No, that is focused on internal technology skills that we need for government, for government I.T., government services.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

So you are creating skills academy within the government structure now?

Chief Information Officer, Digital Services:

It is an initiative as opposed to a function or a department.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Oh, initiative, so you have digital academy within the government. Okay.

Chief Information Officer, Digital Services:

It is a plan at the moment developing. My ambition would be for Digital Jersey to support it, Skills Jersey, Highlands. We would pull on all parts of the greater public sector for it. The focus is to develop government I.T. skills so that we are less reliant on third parties.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Okay. But that is just an internal - I say just an internal - thing?

The Chief Minister:

It will involve external partners and how that develops we will have to ...

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think we will ask about that in another forum perhaps.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Yes, I think we will. Thank you.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Chief Minister, in the hearing with Corporate Services there was some discussion on inclusion and equity and I think an agreement that it had not been embedded sufficiently. Is this something that you will be recommending in your legacy document that you mentioned? What form do you think that should take?

The Chief Minister:

Well, I think after our last panel hearing officials provided you with the Ministerial submission template and its corresponding guidance, which you have had, which shows how we are addressing the D.I. (diversity and inclusion) issues at the earliest policy stages. The collaboration, for example, between I.o.D. (Institute of Directors) and Mind the Gap in developing the gender pay gap toolkit, for example, is something that we have ...

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Sure, but what might that look like? What might the best ideal situation look like in terms of government structure and cross-working to make sure that inclusion and equity is thought about at the earliest point?

The Chief Minister:

Do you know, I do not know what that looks like, if I am honest. I really do not know. The will is there from all of us to make sure we get to the right, the most equitable position we possibly can. We have worked ... I have to pay tribute to I.o.D. and Mind the Gap team for guiding us on that. So if I can just be honest, I do not know what that looks like but rest assured we want to get to the right place.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Do you think there should be a Minister around the table with responsibility for that who should be raising that at every discussion?

The Chief Minister:

I think we could put more focus in a Ministerial portfolio. I do not know if it warrants an individual Minister but certainly we need to look at how that is politically represented.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Thank you. The equality impact evaluation document that you mentioned, how was that used to shape the C.S.P. and the budget allocations?

The Chief Minister:

May I ask Paul to take that?

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

Yes. So, for example, when devising some of the growth items like children to childcare, it goes through that process. The policy officers use that template. They refer to the guidance and make sure at the earliest stage that we are considering these issues in terms of gender and the other identity and characteristics.

The Chief Minister:

I am feeling a bit guilty because Ian is not getting any questions. [Laughter]

Assistant Chief Minister:

I think I have said enough today, Chief Minister.

The Chief Minister:

Right, okay.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Happy to answer any questions.

The Chief Minister:

It was worth a try.

[13:30]

Deputy I. Gardiner:

We have 2 more quick areas to touch on.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Be careful what you wish for. [Laughter]

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Just very quickly as a follow-up, do you support the introduction of gender responsive budgeting, Chief Minister?

The Chief Minister:

Well, I support the principle. I definitely support the principle of that and we are trying to move towards that, but I think there is more work to do.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

Thank you. We did say we would come back to the Social Security Fund. I am going to move on to that just quickly. The Fiscal Policy Panel in its report recently described the proposed temporary reduction in the States' grant to the Social Security Fund as not prudent, I think were the words. What is your response to that?

The Chief Minister:

Well, I think we are being prudent. I unfortunately understand the F.P.P. have not had sight of the actuarial letter and advice we received. I also understood that they did not see the Treasury forecasts and Treasury advice we received, so I need to speak to the Chair of the panel about that. Whether that would have made any difference to their recommendations I am not sure. I think we have been prudent in presenting the budget that we have done for the reasons we have outlined in this meeting, and some of that area was covered in the previous hearing with the Minister for Treasury and Resources and Assistant Minister for Treasury and Resources. We have provided a budget to balance the books. We have based it upon a very healthy fund that has grown exponentially in recent years and can comfortably afford to do this because it is in a much stronger position than we perhaps could have ever imagined 3 or 4 years ago. But as the Minister for Treasury and Resources alluded to earlier, it is a temporary position insofar as we are proposing it for next year's budget pending the full actuarial review, which will be published next year. Now, depending on what that says, we can then act accordingly on that. That will blend into the plan we are producing on how we deal with our financial challenges.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

You say that the panel did not have access to some documents. They are quite important documents in that process. Why did they not have access?

The Chief Minister:

I cannot answer that question. I was informed today, this morning, that ... and I want to speak to the Chair of the panel to get his view on it. But I think it was important that they saw the advice we did receive because we have had actuarial advice.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

It is published.

The Chief Minister:

It is published. We have more advice coming before the budget and we have a full review next year. But as I said, there is no criticism of the panel. I welcome their report. Absolutely, we all agree, I want to make this clear, next year's budget is sustainable for 2026. It balances the books. I think it is responsible in maintaining services. We have efficiencies. If I can just be quick, we are curbing the recruitment freeze at certain grades and the restriction on consultancy has saved us about £50 million since we took office. If we had not have done that, we would be looking at a position that could be up to £50 million worse off than we receive now.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

What will happen if the review comes back saying that the fund is not sustainable but you put 4 years' budget in for services that were promised to the public based on the funds that should go into the Social Security Fund? Because if the review will come back and say actually because of the lower income, because of less working population, because of the increase of the pension liabilities ... because we do not know what our liabilities are currently by investment. If the next year review is coming back and saying it is not sustainable, what would we need to do? We need to find somewhere £50 million that was already promised to the public?

The Chief Minister:

I prefer it if you ask me what would we do if it came back ... if the performance was much better than we expected.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I would be very pleased and I would be very happy and I will support. I would like to see it, but I think to be prudent it means also to ask a question what if not.

The Chief Minister:

I understand that and, 2 things, first of all that is why it is essential we deliver, this Government delivers, a plan and a proposed direction of travel for the next Assembly. But if that happens, then we are going to have to make some very difficult decisions. We are going to have to balance. We are going to have to look at our income forecasts and then we are going to have a look what opportunities we have for revenue and what further opportunities we have for efficiencies. Very difficult choices but I am confident we can get through it. Because can I just say outside of these challenges we are fortunate that we do have strong reserves, notwithstanding we used up all of our short-term reserves during COVID. But we cannot rely on those for too much longer. We have to change the position.

Deputy L.K.F. Stephenson:

I appreciate the points that are being made. All of those things, waiting for a full actuarial review and assessing, setting up a new Government in the first place and then going through and looking at savings, consulting with the public, growing the economy, they all take time. What is a realistic timescale for that?

The Chief Minister:

Well, this Government will deliver its report prior to the elections in June. The elections take place. The new Government will be formed. They create their C.S.P. and then the big challenge I think is how we deal with the budget next year for 2027. That will depend on a number of factors. It will depend on the economy, the rate of inflation, revision of income, how much money we get in from

Pillar 2. We have budgeted £50 million. We might get more. We do not know. At least at the time when we are doing that work or the new Government, the new Assembly, is doing that work, they will have more up to date information to base their decisions on.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

The last few questions are around the legislative programme. How does the current legislative programme affect the priorities set out in the C.S.P.?

The Chief Minister:

Again, we have tried to focus our legislative priorities around C.S.P. but over and above that our working group regularly convenes to monitor prioritisation. We work with other Ministers and other groups to try and create the right balance and make sure what we have in our programme is deliverable. I think one of the big examples of that is the amount of resource we put into the violence against women and girls review, where we accepted all of that. I do not know if Paul wanted to add anything quickly.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

What mechanisms are there to track that? Because, of course, since those decisions and since the C.S.P. there has been additional legislative work being added as well. There has been a lot we have seen that is not anything related to the C.S.P. so ...

The Chief Minister:

We always keep a bit of reserve space for any surprises, last minute changes, any urgent legislation we need.

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

In devising its Common Strategic Policy, the Council of Ministers was very aware of 2 years and in the main legislation takes about 18 months. So we were looking at other levers to deliver those C.S.P. items. That said, the Chief Minister is absolutely right, you have the violence against women and girls. You have the Residential Tenancy Law. These are examples where it did actually require a legislative change, but in the main the C.S.P. was about getting on with delivery, getting the cash and getting things done. So the legislative programme we manage more generally to make sure that all of those items can get through, trying to balance demand and capacity with our drafting colleagues.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Just as we are coming to the end of the term, will all those C.S.P. priorities in the legislative perspective be achieved before the end of this term? Is there any risk to that?

Chief Officer, Cabinet Office:

I meet with the Law Officers' Department and the Legislative Drafting Office and I convene all of our policy colleagues across government. Our programme is still sound at present. You can never be 100 per cent about these things because the nature of drafting is that it throws up things you were not expecting. But certainly the Common Strategic Policy legislative items I have no concerns about.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I was just going to ask, I suppose, a summing up question but not necessarily the final one, is about the ...

Deputy I. Gardiner:

No, the final one. It is okay.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I do not mean this in a critical way. You have touched on the economy but I have not heard a lot about productivity and economic growth in terms of the third way of getting out of future financial trouble. So instead of taxing or cutting, what steps is this Government taking to make sure, for example, tourism, that we see a revival in tourism?

The Chief Minister:

I am pleased to speak about this because, as you know, I was 8 years as Minister for Economic Development, the best 8 years of my life so far, apart from the last 2, of course. But you could argue we were in slightly easier economic times then, it was pre-COVID, pre-Brexit and the world order was in better shape. In relation to tourism, I am pleased to see significant extra funding has been provided to Visit Jersey. I know there is a proposal to consider putting some more into that, which the Minister for Economic Development is considering. We are not alone in our challenges with tourism. Most of the U.K. (United Kingdom) was down. I think the Republic of Ireland was down about 30 per cent. EasyJet were offering £30 return flights to Spain in August from the U.K. It is a very challenging market. I think there are some optimistic signs. For example, I am pleased to see that DFDS timetables and bookings opened the earliest they have ever opened. When I last spoke to them, there had been about 25,000 bookings already for next year. I think that will help significantly. Then it is down to the economy team, the Minister working with Visit Jersey and their other stakeholders to see how they can grow that. Of course, the rest of the economy relies on, I think, Government just stepping back a bit more. I have said it time and time again. I think we overregulate ourselves in many areas. Of course, this is no criticism of the relevant Ministers of all the departments, they all do really good work, but if we are serious about this, we need to look at how we regulate, how we enable businesses and the economy to grow. Then, of course, something

I think that is very positive is the work that Deputy Gorst is leading on ensuring we have a good, strong financial services sector for the years ahead. But you are going to want to question him about that in a different hearing.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

Thank you very much and thank you for your extra time. The public hearing is closed.

The Chief Minister:

No final question, Deputy Gardiner?

Deputy I. Gardiner:

No.

The Chief Minister:

I was expecting a ... no, okay. Fantastic.

Deputy I. Gardiner:

I think that Deputy Tadier asked actually, if you look here, what have you done to ensure that the economy grows, so I think that is it.

[13:41]