

Please note this transcript has not yet been reviewed for factual accuracy. It is currently undergoing a verification process, during which Ministers and relevant departments are invited to check and confirm the accuracy of the information presented. A final, fact-checked version will be published once this process is complete. In the meantime, readers should treat this transcript as a draft and be aware that factual accuracy corrections may follow.

States of Jersey
States Assembly



États de Jersey
Assemblée des États

Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel

Proposed Budget 2027-30 Review Hearing

Witness: The Chief Minister

Friday, 16th October 2026

Panel:

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central (Chair)
Deputy L.D. Carpenter of St. Helier Central (Vice Chair)
Deputy C.D. Leck of St. Saviour
Deputy C.J. Rebindaine of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter
Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity

Witnesses:

Senator L.J. Farnham - The Chief Minister
Deputy M.R. Ferey of St. Saviour - Assistant Chief Minister
Mr. P. Wylie - Chief Executive Officer
Mr. R. Bell - Treasurer of the States
Ms. L. Darwin - Chief People Officer

[10:46]

Deputy L.V. Feltham of St. Helier Central (Chair):

Hello and welcome to this public hearing of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel. Today is 16th October 2026 and this is our proposed Budget 2027-2030 review hearing with the Chief Minister. I would like to draw to everyone's attention the following. The hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. All

electronic devices, including mobile phones, should be switched to silent. For the purposes of the recording and the transcript, I would be grateful if everyone who speaks can ensure that we know your name and role, but we will do introductions first. So, firstly, I am Deputy Lyndsay Feltham and I am the Chair of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel.

Deputy L.D. Carpenter of St. Helier Central:

Deputy Lee Carpenter, Vice Chair of the panel.

Deputy C.D. Leck of St. Saviour:

Chris Leck, Deputy for St. Saviour.

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

Deputy Hilary Jeune.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter:

Deputy Chris Rebindaine.

The Chief Minister:

Good morning. Senator Lyndon Farnham, Chief Minister.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Deputy Malcolm Ferey, Assistant Chief Minister.

Chief Executive Officer:

Paul Wylie, Chief Executive Officer.

Chief People Officer:

Lesley Darwin, Chief People Officer.

Treasurer of the States:

Richard Bell, Treasurer.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. Thank you, everybody. We have set aside 2 hours for this hearing. We have quite a few questions to get through so we would appreciate clear and concise answers as usual. We will start by questioning the Chief Minister on Common Strategic Policy priorities and other Ministerial and business as usual priorities.

The Chief Minister:

I am just getting my copy of the C.S.P. (Common Strategic Policy). I prepped for a Budget hearing; I did not realise we were doing C.S.P., but anyway.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

It is okay. It is the Budget in relation to the C.S.P.

The Chief Minister:

Oh, okay. All right, fine.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

It should be absolutely fine. So, Chief Minister, the previous review into the Budget 2026-2029 by the previous panel made a number of findings and recommendations, to which your Ministerial response in January 2026 suggested they be considered by the new, incoming Government. The response stated: "The Council of Ministers is grateful for the panel's review, the detailed findings and the proposed recommendations. They are best considered by the new Council of Ministers when they formulate the proposed Common Strategic Policy and Budget later this year." Senator Farnham, as you were re-elected as Chief Minister, did you consider the findings and recommendations of the previous Budget 2026-2029 review when formulating the proposed Common Strategic Policy and proposed Budget, as you suggested in your response to the previous panel?

The Chief Minister:

The short answer to that is yes, they were considered. Whether they were all considered in great detail I would have to refer to other Ministerial colleagues because it was largely cross-cutting. I do not have a copy of that letter in front of me, but largely yes, they were part of the deliberations.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. Can you recall any changes specifically that were brought forward as a result of the response to the scrutiny recommendations?

The Chief Minister:

Well, like I say, without having the letter I sent in front of me I cannot recall off the top of my head, basically. That is why I think if we had advance notice of some of the questions we could prep for them. Unless anyone can remember the letter or the ...

Chief Executive Officer:

Not specifically, no.

The Chief Minister:

So sorry about that, yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. We can follow that up in writing.

The Chief Minister:

We would be delighted to give you that information but ...

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

That is absolutely fine. Okay. So in relation to the Budget and how common strategic priorities within the C.S.P. are aligned, we have a few questions in relation to that because that is about how the Budget was formulated.

The Chief Minister:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Chief Minister when developing the proposed Common Strategic Policy and its 11 priorities, what comprehensive mapping was done to identify how Budget allocations proposed for 2027-2030 support each of those 11 C.S.P. priorities?

The Chief Minister:

Well, you see, when you use phrases like “mapping” I will refer to the process we followed, which was largely based on Ministers and officials who had a number of meetings, officials working up recommendations based on the briefs we gave them, and then a series of Council of Ministers’ meetings. I can ask Paul to explain the mapping process if you want some detail on that, but that was the overall foundation of how we developed the Budget.

Chief Executive Officer:

Absolutely. So what you have in the Common Strategic Policy is basically 4 pillars, 4 themes of work, and of course that runs for the entire 4-year term. This Budget is a transitional Budget so it is largely inheriting the Budget as was planned but identifying within that growth areas which do align with what we have discussed in those 4 pillars. So cost of living, affordability, it has a number of measures that will be taken immediately, while we develop our 3-year Budget. In terms of maintaining public finances, it produces a stable Budget but again looks ahead to the 3-year Budgets to identify more savings that you can put in terms of the Investing in Jersey and competitiveness.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. So just for clarity, you did not sit with a list of the priorities and look at the budgetary requirements of those priorities when formulating the Budget?

Chief Executive Officer:

Oh, yes, we did.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

You did?

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, absolutely, yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. So in consideration of that, which priorities received the largest share of funding and why?

The Chief Minister:

I mean, those are difficult questions to ask on the hoof without going through the whole Budget document. Treasurer?

Treasurer of the States:

So as the Chief Exec just remarked, largely there is a one-year transitional Budget leading up to the work that we did and then a 3-year Budget that will look more fundamentally at the allocation of resources by department, which is closely linked to those outcomes. In terms of growth, where this question is often asked and is probably more expected in that transitional state Budget rather than considering re-allocations, the areas of growth in the Budget, largely health, they arise from addressing risks, in particular public safety risks arising through uniformed services, in particular fire, and in respect of again public safety, but are directly linked to legislation approved in the last Government or the last Assembly relating to violence against women and girls, where that work was done, while it was post the last Budget decisions, to clearly lay out what the financial implications will be of implementing the Budget. That features heavily there also. The capital programme is largely as is but was already pointing towards the priorities, be they arising through the outcomes or be they arising through the risks, so in particular there, of course, is the hospital project.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So would it be fair to say that Ministers looked at the risk register and identified budgets in relation to that?

The Chief Minister:

Well, the risk work is always well aligned with budgeting in its various guises. We are always mindful of the risks associated with budgeting. I cannot speak for every single Minister but I am pretty sure we were well covered off on that area.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. So are there any priorities that have been identified by the Council of Ministers that were not supported by dedicated funding in this particular Budget?

The Chief Minister:

In the initial discussions, our initial discussions were ... they start broad. We were focused on the feedback from the election and basically our knowledge of the community and the challenges it faces. Could you just repeat the original question?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So were there any priorities that were identified in the C.S.P. that have not been supported by dedicated funding?

The Chief Minister:

Oh, yes. If we are looking at the Investing in Jersey programme, that is quite a broad programme. That is why this Budget is a transitional budget, largely, to deal with the immediate challenges, the immediate support for families. The idea is once we then prioritise some of the bigger projects, we deal with that in the 2028-30 Budget if the States agree to the 3-year budgeting process. So the short answer is we have made sure what we have put ... the short-term priorities in the C.S.P. are funded, the longer-term ones there is still work to be done.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. Thank you. I think that is clear. Have there been any resources reprioritised and, if so, what process within Ministers was used to identify what activities could reduce or stop and how to do that reprioritisation?

The Chief Minister:

So that work was done mainly with officials internally. That is work being chaired by the work that the Chief Executive Officer has been leading on, originally as Chief Officer of the Cabinet Office. Paul, if you can explain the process of that.

Chief Executive Officer:

Okay. So you have a recurring programme of external recruitment freeze and prohibitions on use of consultancy. That drives behaviours to reprioritise because as those vacancies arise you can reprioritise within in order to, ideally, live within those means. Then within the Budget were a series of savings, including £10 million of efficiency savings that we will apply through 2027 where we are looking to reduce internal governance and administration and functions which have built quite considerably since 2018. Aligning to the C.S.P, we want to make sure that those ... our scarce resources are focused on the front line, which is increasingly around feasibility for capital infrastructure projects through the Investing in Jersey programme.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. Now, we have spoken a bit about risk already, but at what stage in the process was risk analysis undertaken and what did that process entail and who was involved in that?

Chief Executive Officer:

So as we developed at the very earliest stage, the very first workshop, the Council of Ministers considered risk because within that we were determining areas of early priority for the Common Strategic Policy.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Can I just ask specifically what information they were given around risk? Which risk registers did they see?

Chief Executive Officer:

So in the packs we did we had both of them and each ...

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Sorry, which? That was not clear.

Chief Executive Officer:

Sorry, in the briefing packs that went alongside the Council of Ministers workshop there were both the corporate risk registers and the public risk registers or the Island risk register. We had a kind of synthesised version of that that we actually debated within the Council of Ministers workshop, which leads you on to aligning with the Island outcome indicators, polling, the feedback from the election. All of that ends up in a politicised prioritisation process which gets you to the C.S.P.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. Then did all Ministers see their own departmental risk registers when considering their departmental budgets? Was that part of the process?

The Chief Minister:

I have not specifically asked every Minister that question but I am pretty sure they did. Effective risk management is embedded in the process all of the way through. We operate sort of a structured hierarchy of risk management with risk managed and escalated through the departments up to the overall Island risk register.

[11:00]

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So you are confident as Chief Minister ...

The Chief Minister:

I am confident but I cannot answer for every single Minister. It is certainly an important consideration of our discussions.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. It is stated in the proposed Budget that the Budget document sets out how the Government will deploy its finances to deliver on the priorities of the C.S.P. That is the Common Strategic Policy. When assessing the alignment of the proposed Budget and the C.S.P. some priorities appear to be more strongly evidenced in the Budget than others. How have the gaps and risks been assessed where significant policy commitment is provided in the C.S.P. without readily identifiable budgets evidenced against those in the Budget?

The Chief Minister:

Could you give us some examples?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes.

Chief Executive Officer:

Do you mean like the difference between competitiveness and cost of living?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So for the ... if you take the secure Jersey's competitive edge in financial and related professional services, including A.I. (artificial intelligence) impacts, strategic alignment appears to be present but no specific budget allocation is evident for A.I. readiness, for example. Reducing regulation and red tape, including in the planning system, there is a specific commitment to deliver this on the C.S.P.

However, in the Budget there is no clear budget measure or funded programme to deliver this commitment. So those are the types of examples.

The Chief Minister:

Time to Win has a significant budget, so in relation to the Time to Win work that is all included, as I understand, in the full Budget.

Chief Executive Officer:

That was already in the Budget, in the 2026 Budget.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think the addition would be about the Time to Win for the local economy. So the fact that there is ... in the local economy you want to do the difference, there is a ... Time to Win for the finance industry has a significant budget, as you said, and when would we see the ...

The Chief Minister:

So that is a new piece of work that the Minister for Economic Development is working on. He will scope that with his original budgetary resources and a piece of work like that should be able to be funded from reprioritisation of his existing budget.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. Obviously not all of those C.S.P. priorities are necessarily projects; some of them are policy reform rather than specific budgetary investment that we might see, like competitive reforms, planning reforms, public sector reforms, and transition to net zero. What evidence gives the Council of Ministers confidence that they have the capacity to deliver those within the resources within the Budget?

The Chief Minister:

Well, I think we have to find the capacity. We have said in the past that the existing structure that we inherited some time ago was unsustainable. The spending trajectory was continuously rising upwards. So if we are going to get our finances back on track, we had to look at all of these issues. Reluctant to repeat a sort of review of the target operating model and a complete restructure of the public sector, we are just looking for areas of overlap, of duplication, and looking at, with the support of improving technology, ways we can make ourselves leaner and more efficient. That was the premise on which we are basing all of this. We are minded we cannot do everything with the funding available so we have tried to produce a balance. Paul, do you want to add anything?

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes. So the Council of Ministers was very keen that we brought forward our business planning process to enable a better Budget debate. So what you will have by mid-November is the departmental plans, of which the policy work that we identify for 2027 and also the legislative programme will be included.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So when you say you have brought forward the departmental business plans, at what stage in the process did that happen? The departmental business plans, did that happen before the Budget was agreed or approved?

The Chief Minister:

It was all running concurrently.

Chief Executive Officer:

It was running concurrently. What you have had in previous years is the publication in January or February and the Council of Ministers heard from previous debates that that is unhelpful when you are trying to have a Budget debate in December. So it was a conscious thing to bring it forward and hopefully it will help.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

All right. We will look forward to seeing those departmental business plans and how they inform the Budget. I do not want to get into non-Ministerial right now because that is a further question plan, but in relation to priorities that depend primarily on legislative or policy change, and given the fact that we have a set number of F.T.E.s (full-time equivalents) funded within the Budget, have resource assessments been undertaken for those to ensure that those changes can happen and we have the resources?

Chief Executive Officer:

Policy and legislation? Yes, absolutely. I chair a monthly group with the legislative drafting officer, the principal one, and the Law Officers' Department for that purpose.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. In relation as the Budget says that it is delivering on the C.S.P. and it enables Ministers to deliver on the C.S.P., for the priority 1, which is cost of living, the C.S.P. commits to review affordability from 2028 onwards.

The Chief Minister:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

What methodology, performance indicators and reporting arrangements will be used to assess whether affordability has improved?

The Chief Minister:

Methodology indicators, you will have to excuse me. I prefer to use sort of more easily understood language to keep it simple. So with affordability we I think agreed around the Council of Ministers table that to solve a problem you have to understand it fully. Clearly, I do not think we understand as a Government and possibly as an Assembly all of the affordability challenges Islanders are facing. In times gone by we used to target the majority of our support to the lowest income households and those who we perceive need the help most. Of course, times have moved on and we are seeing now evidence of middle-income households, for example, and even middle to high income households with all of the affordability pressures now, seeing those impacted more than ever before. So we have established a Ministerial Affordability Group, which is an evolution of the former Cost of Living Group. They are currently putting together, working with Islanders to form an affordability advisory forum consisting of charities and business representatives and other groups and organisations to do a time-limited piece of work and to provide advice and recommendations from people with front line lived experience about how we might address that. That piece of work we are going to ask to be completed by the end of May next year so it can inform the next Budget.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. In relation to informing this Budget, I recall that there was the piece of work on minimum income standards that was contracted out last year so that that would be ready in time to inform this year's Budget. Is there an update on that piece of work and why it was not available to inform this Budget?

The Chief Minister:

There is. The university ... I forgot who has completed it, Paul?

Chief Executive Officer:

University of Loughborough.

The Chief Minister:

Loughborough, yes. I think that work is almost completed and we are expecting it to be produced imminently.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay.

The Chief Minister:

So in relation to ... that will be more helpful for the next Budget. This Budget we focused the resources we had on the issues, the support issues that are listed in this Budget.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So given what you had at the time, how did you come to the conclusions that you came to about how those measures would improve affordability and what are you expecting to see as an outcome from the measures in this year's Budget?

The Chief Minister:

Well, I think we use basically our collective understanding of how Islanders were impacted by recent cost of living pressures, both from political experience, what we heard from Islanders during the election, from work carried out in the past by our statistics unit, so the use of statistics and modelling by officials. We felt we were able to produce a fairly accurate understanding of where we needed to prioritise the money we had available and that is represented in the Budget.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Given that modelling that has been done by officials, has the Government established a baseline affordability indicator at this point in time?

The Chief Minister:

Not to my knowledge, no.

Chief Executive Officer:

No, no, but ...

The Chief Minister:

Not yet.

Chief Executive Officer:

... as the Chief Minister described, it is a mix of quantitative data and also the feedback from qualitative groups like the forum that we are establishing.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. I am not sure if we quite got the answer around this so I will ask again, even though ... so as a result of this particular Budget what affordability improvements do you expect to achieve by 2030 and how will those be reported?

The Chief Minister:

Affordability improvements?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes, so affordability ...

The Chief Minister:

So just to be ... so when we look at, for example, extending nursery care by 5 hours a week for 2 to 3-year-olds, we expect to see improvement in more people with 2 to 3-year-old children getting additional funding, if that is not too simplistic an explanation.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay.

The Chief Minister:

Unless I am missing something.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Were there any other elements of affordability that we should see being tracked?

The Chief Minister:

We have doubled, for example, the maternity grant. We have increased the child allowance. We have increased the tax allowance, albeit the cost of living. We have applied 4.7 per cent increase to the pension. Malcolm?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Community cost bonus increased by £200.

The Chief Minister:

So all of that is aimed to provide some relief to Islanders, but like I say, I think more targeted and more detailed financial support will be forthcoming once we have collated a lot of the data and information we have commissioned.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. If you are saying that the minimum income standards piece of work is due imminently, if that comes out and tells a different story to the Council of Ministers would you amend your own Budget in order to kind of improve affordability for Islanders?

The Chief Minister:

I think it is hard to say until we see the report. We are always open to working with Members to amendments and if information changes or ... then we would be prepared to change with it, but we have nothing to suggest that currently. It will be interesting to see this review when it comes out. I think you might have commissioned it.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I did not. It was the former Minister for Economic Development.

The Chief Minister:

Oh, okay.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

But I did some work to ensure it was commissioned. Moving on C.S.P. priority 2, A.I. and competitiveness, within this Budget what resources have been set aside to respond to the effects of A.I. on Jersey's economy and the workforce?

Chief Executive Officer:

So what we have done with the Common Strategic Policy is separate it out into those different economic sectors. We have already discussed the Time to Win and A.I. is featured in there. That is where we need to be competitive in the future and make sure that the financial services and related professional services are looking ahead to both the benefits and disbenefits of A.I. What you find particularly in that sector is there has been some offshoring already and those are probably the areas that are more likely going to be useful for A.I. in the short term. So to an extent we are protected but there are still going to be some challenges. That is in financial services. Then what we found in terms of feedback from Time to Win was that industry in particular likes the process. It likes being brought into the tent and allowed to debate these policy issues. That is why Deputy Voisin is going to be running a similar process for each of the other economic sectors. Then, finally, within that pillar is also work to identify what is it that our apprentices and younger Islanders need in the future, which will be part of the pre-Budget.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So we discussed the money in the Budget for the Time to Win report. You have now talked about a Time to Win for other sectors. Is there money in the Budget for that?

The Chief Minister:

I thought we just went through that. So the scoping work is being done out of the existing economy Budget and depending on the scope, what that looks like, it should be able to be operated from within existing budgets. We will have to do the scope of work first.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. So moving on to priority 11, which is public sector reform and how that is then reflected within the Budget and the impact of that, in your Ministerial response following the previous Budget review 2026-2029 it was noted that work was ongoing to identify options to reduce public sector costs. Which of those were actually carried through in the Budget for 2027-2030?

The Chief Minister:

Sorry, could you just repeat the first part again, please?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So when you responded previously to the previous Budget review it was noted at that point that work was ongoing to identify options to reduce public sector costs, some of which we have spoken about today. Which of those were specifically carried through in the Budget 2027-2030?

The Chief Minister:

I am not quite understanding the question. Are you referring to the previous year's Budget or this Budget?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So when responding to the last Scrutiny Panel's review it was noted that there was ongoing work by Government to identify options to reduce public sector costs. Obviously then a suite of options would have been presented to Ministers.

The Chief Minister:

Fine, okay, I have it now. I am back on track.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Which of those were kind of accepted and carried through?

The Chief Minister:

Yes. You can explain this.

Chief Executive Officer:

I can talk to that. So I led that work with the previous Council of Ministers and we had States Members' workshops on it.

[11:15]

In relation to the 2027 Budget there are 2 areas: first, reducing complexity and, secondly, ensuring affordability. So in terms of reducing complexity, within the Budget is £10 million worth of efficiency savings, as we discussed earlier, in terms of moving that function ... moving that money into more priority work.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Are they identified, the efficiencies?

Chief Executive Officer:

The areas are and it is budgeting. So budgeting provides the financial envelope and then as an executive leadership team we have been clear about what is it that you need to reduce in terms of responsibilities on the accountable officer, be it in the Public Finance Manual or our own guidance, that allows you to reduce effort in that space that frees up people to work on Investing in Jersey. Secondly, on ensuring affordability there are 2 key changes there. The first is the pension reforms that we introduced, which were based on the actuarial review. We found that the pension contribution was higher than it needed to be.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So which pension are we talking about there?

Chief Executive Officer:

Sorry, public sector pension. So not the teachers, it is everyone else's. So it is all of the public sector workers. Both the employer's contribution and also the employee's contribution was about one per cent higher than it needed to be. So for the Government that results in £11 million recurring saving. Then also on the issue of affordability what we found through that process of identifying what grew and why it grew, a number of formula-driven growth items were introduced such as linking Jersey's overseas aid budget to a percentage of the G.V.A. (gross value added). The Council of Ministers took a difficult decision to repurpose some of that money in the short term to cost of living and affordability, so froze it in cash levels for that purpose.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. So we have efficiencies ... I am just trying to ...

Chief Executive Officer:

Go on, please.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

We have efficiencies that have been apportioned to certain areas, you say, but ...

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

... we do not know where the efficiencies specifically are at the moment.

The Chief Minister:

As the Chief Executive said, we have identified where we believe ... the areas we believe the savings can be made and those savings are reflected in the Budget as you see. What we have not done is pretend that every individual change can or should be decided before the detailed work is completed. It is quite a dynamic piece of work. We are still discovering where there are duplications, where we can make changes, where we can increase output in certain areas. We are looking systematically at how we can simplify administration, reduce unnecessary management and bureaucracy and make better use of our property and other assets, for example. Some of those changes can and have been made relatively quickly; others will require proper analysis and more consultation and Ministerial decisions moving forward. I mean, the ultimate aim is just to make us leaner and more efficient. Like I say, because we are doing it systematically it is quite a dynamic piece of work.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you for that, Chief Minister, because I am looking at table 12 of the Budget, which is reoccurring savings proposals, which is what we are talking about. You are saying yes, it is definitely sensible to look at this and weigh the equality up, but there is in 2030 future savings of nearly £34 million. What would that be? It is a very specific amount, £33,761. It is very specific.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, and I will hand over to Paul to explain that.

Chief Executive Officer:

Perhaps the Treasurer ...

Treasurer of the States:

As things stand in 2030 - that is not to say they are going to change - legislation is such that the States' grant to the social security fund increases at that point. We will receive the reviews, including the actuarial review, of the social security fund to inform ongoing policy in respect of social security funding. Ahead of that we have put together this Budget, which will be followed up with more detail in the 2028-2030 Budget, a line that says in the event that there are no other changes at that point we will need to have delivered a further ... that is the balancing number of the savings needed in order to be able to refund the social security grant in full.

The Chief Minister:

So if you want some more information, I mean, it is fair to say some of it is, I guess, commercially sensitive but, Paul, would you like to ...?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I think what we will do is ... because we have spent quite a long time on this and it is time to kind of move on to the next bit.

The Chief Minister:

Okay, fine.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

So we will follow up in writing. I think there is still some more information around ...

The Chief Minister:

There is a plan in place.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

... efficiencies and savings that we need, but I will hand over to Deputy Rebindaine.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Chief Minister ...

The Chief Minister:

Good morning.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

... good morning. So we are using the C.S.P.s as part of this Budget process because we see the 2 going effectively hand in hand. But you will be pleased to know as we had the same sort of educational background I will use words that we are both familiar with.

The Chief Minister:

Thank you.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

So where there are cross-departmental priorities across the Budget and the C.S.P.s, how do you ensure the risks and delivery are managed so that gaps and non-delivery are both identified and addressed?

The Chief Minister:

That is generally how we manage the public sector and the delivery of the Ministerial work. The processes that ensure that are well embedded in our working and that has always been the case, where particularly I think some of the reorganisation we have done, where we have managed to reduce duplication and provide better focus in certain areas, has also been helpful. We completely understand that as we are now bearing down on the costs of running the public sector we have to pay very careful attention to make sure we are delivering improved productivity and we are not affecting the essential front line services. In fact, you could argue that the budget with the Investing in Jersey programme does just the opposite. It looks to reduce the cost of running the centre but put more resource into the areas that impact that Islanders will feel the benefit from.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Do you see your Ministers in the Council operating ... when we said A.I., that is going to hit education. It is going to hit the economy. It is going to hit Senator Gorst's domain. Do you see these individuals working collaboratively together across ...?

The Chief Minister:

Absolutely, and early indications are more so than ever. There is a lot of cross-cutting work here and we work together and we are doing that specifically in the new Government with evolved and new Ministerial working groups.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

I sit across a number of Scrutiny Panels and most people who come to us say: "My priorities are" whereas I prefer to hear: "Our priorities are."

The Chief Minister:

Yes.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Do you get where I am coming from?

The Chief Minister:

Yes, I do. Our Ministers are all, I think, working collaboratively. The language that is used, I think we are all guilty of that because Ministers have a legal responsibility to prioritise their own Ministerial responsibilities. A lot of that work is consolidated, which is one of the reasons why the Council of Ministers exists. Those I have worked with on previous Councils of Ministers in the past will realise that is an inclusive and constructive process where Ministers very often before making decisions bring their findings to Council of Ministers so we have a collaborative and collective approach. So I think it is working well. It is early days for the new Government but indications are we have got off to a reasonable start.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

So what formal mechanisms will you use to track progress across multi-departmental priorities which align into those C.S.P.s and where does accountability lie in such situations?

The Chief Minister:

Well, it depends. If you are talking about political responsibility it lies with the relevant Minister, generally speaking. Accountable officers are responsible ultimately for finances.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

When it traverses across different, as the public often see it, siloes?

The Chief Minister:

Right. Okay, Paul.

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes. We spent quite a lot of time in Council of Ministers workshops identifying what Ministerial groups would best serve the Common Strategic Policy. So I am happy to share; it is not secret. There is detailed planning beneath the C.S.P. which shows who is your lead Minister, who is your lead official and which Ministerial group is bringing that together. As the Chief Minister mentioned, you bring back to the Council of Ministers on a regular basis to make sure the whole thing is being delivered.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Okay. Given Senator Maclean's desire to balance the books and the inevitable budget constraints, which of the C.S.P. priorities do you think present the greatest delivery risk and are there any mitigations that are being put in place?

The Chief Minister:

Risk or ... I share the Minister for Treasury and Resources' desire to balance the books. I think we all do. Balancing the books means actually ... well, I want to more than balance them, we want to be in a position where we have a surplus. We can invest some of that surplus back into the community through Investing in Jersey and put some of that surplus into stabilisation funds and strategic reserves and so forth. That is why this Budget has been described as boring by some, but it aims very much to be a little bit boring because we are still in the process of steadying the ship from the curbing the growth that we have done.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Who is describing it as boring?

The Chief Minister:

Oh, some commentators; not anybody around this table. **[Laughter]** But the Minister for Treasury and Resources was quite pleased that it was being described as boring because what we want is stability, really. We realise there are big financial and affordability issues facing Islanders and businesses, so we need to make sure ... before we can properly address those we need to make sure our books are balanced and we are pointing in the right direction. So that is really the aim of this Budget.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

During the year there will be changing risks. How are you going to monitor and report those and take action if needed if things are not going to plan?

The Chief Minister:

As I said before, the risk analysis and monitoring is embedded in the process across the public sector. We continue with the way we have always done it where risks are identified, monitored, raised at a Ministerial level and then they work their way through the system.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Is that financial risk?

The Chief Minister:

Well, it all depends. It could be a number of different risks. In relation to financial risks the Treasurer will give you more specific detail on that.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Will you just shout loudly? **[Laughter]**

Treasurer of the States:

Louder than normal.

The Chief Minister:

The Treasurer does not shout very often.

Treasurer of the States:

We go from one cycle of the Budget into the next so we will be doing some income forecasting. Within the income forecasting Ministers are asked ... and we started to develop for 2028-2030 ... we have done it in previous periods as well, to start to work on scenarios, downside scenarios, as to what certain impacts might make upon income as well as not losing sight of the fact of the opportunities that are presented and also having identified some of the financial risks through the Time to Win programme getting ahead of those and addressing them. For example, A.I. use is covered to a degree within the Time to Win reports that were generated, for example. So we would be doing some risk analysis on the income flows. In terms of spending, I would just say that, as the Chief Minister says, we have the usual means through which we would identify them. They are supposed to be ... there is what we call a general reserve in place. We have increased the amount that is in the general reserve this year compared to previous years' allocations based upon the risks that we see. That is not to say those risks turn into issues, nor is it to say that the issues necessarily lead to funding requirement, but we have increased the provision in there so that we can address those during the year should they come up or should the risks that we can see translate into issues further down the line on the spending side.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Okay. Thank you.

The Chief Minister:

If I could just add that the risk management strategy was last updated in 2023. We are currently updating it. We have had consultation in the first half of this year so we will be providing probably I think first quarter next year an update to the risk strategy. Just for information.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Okay. Thank you, Chief Minister. Can you explain to the panel what performance reporting was undertaken to demonstrate delivery of the 2026 Budget which is then fed into your deliberations for 2027?

The Chief Minister:

I think I might have to turn to the Treasurer. Are you talking about the financial measures? Yes.

Treasurer of the States:

So in respect of income, going back to my last answer, we regularly will be looking at the income forecast. We monitor that during the year in terms of those income streams that we can see coming through. Indeed, even in the event ... even in the cases of those where the tax assessing is once a year, we have a fair idea of what is coming through in respect of income tax through the I.T.I.S. (Income Tax Instalment Scheme) system. So we can see how that compares to previous years and see whether that is consistent with the modelling that we have previously done.

[11:30]

So there is that process on the income side. The other side of income is on corporate tax in particular. Some of that is through modelling but a great deal of that is done by the economy and tax team talking with the large taxpayers within the corporate sector to understand what they see in terms of profitability going forwards. In respect of 2026 performance, so that is feeding into the 2027-2030 forecasts, so where we do the income forecastings basically through the assumptions that the F.P.P. (Fiscal Policy Panel) provide for us, which has a forward look, there are a lower and upper bound within that as well. But secondly, we are using live information of what we see coming through in 2026 to apply those assumptions to the base, if you see what I mean. So we will at any point have a better information flow in respect of what we are receiving in the current year on the income side. On the spend side, we generate monthly spend by departments and are in active conversations with those departments where their finances are strained and we are identifying programmes that we need to put in place in respect of particular pressures for particular departments from 2028 through to 2030 to inform the next Budget as well. One example of that would be the work that the Health Department is doing on the future funding requirements. So while those future funding requirements have not all been completely ironed out, we have increased the funding into health above the rate of inflation based upon the current understanding of where we see the long-term requirements being.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Okay. Thank you. Given the 3-year Budget is going to be obviously a very big event should it come to pass, what sort of reporting framework can we expect to enable the Assembly and the public to assess delivery of 2027 in the lead-up to the proposals for 2028-2030?

The Chief Minister:

Well, currently we can expect similar continuation of what we do now, unless the new Minister for Treasury and Resources and the team are planning to review or change that, given we are moving to ... potentially moving to 3-year budgeting, which changes the dynamic of how it works slightly. It is worth remembering the Assembly stays completely in control of the budgeting and we will agree a 3-year budget in one year and that does not mean it is set in stone for 3 years. It means that the following year the Assembly can make amendment or change it, depending on circumstances. But it provides a level of greater continuity, especially for people who rely on Government funding.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Just so that you know, Chief Minister, and I have said this to the Minister for Treasury and Resources, that is quite a significant change and it will require scrutiny to be able to look at that legislation in good time.

The Chief Minister:

Yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

The Government should be considering timeframes that enable the Scrutiny Panel to call that legislation in if we require it.

The Chief Minister:

Understood. Yes, thank you.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay.

Treasurer of the States:

I can just reassure the Chair that we at Treasury have done that in terms of our ... towards bringing the measures through to the Assembly and the intention will be to lodge ... I was going to say Q4 but that is ... we are in Q4 now, are we not? This quarter, and indeed we are well developed on the proposals that we will bring to the Council of Ministers and we will look to go and brief the Scrutiny Panel as soon as we can thereafter.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Thank you.

The Chief Minister:

If we do that then more time can be allowed for scrutiny, yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Absolutely. It will need to be scrutinised. It is a large change in legislation. Now moving on to sustainable well-being, Future Jersey vision and performance framework and how that relates to the Budget, Deputy Jeune.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Thank you. Chief Minister, it was acknowledged in the Ministerial response to the previous review of the Budget from 2026-2029 that the legislation Public Finance Law requires the Council of Ministers to take account of sustainable well-being when preparing the Budget. Can you outline the process followed when preparing this proposed Budget to ensure that all Ministers, including those that are new to the Assembly, were made aware of this legal requirement and the process used to account for it in the proposals put forward?

The Chief Minister:

So the ... again, I am sorry, could you just simplify that a bit for me?

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

So when you were talking around the table, the Council of Ministers, when was sustainable well-being and the legal requirements that ... rather than it being an add-on at the end, when was it put in the process?

The Chief Minister:

The sustainable well-being, the Island outcome indicators and all of the other strategies and policies that underpin that were the starting point. We were clear right from the very start, being mindful of our responsibilities under the Finances Law, to prepare a Budget that not only deals with the challenges today but safeguards the financial future for Islanders. As we did with previous Budgets, that was the foundation of the Budget and C.S.P.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

So the first time that new Ministers were presented with a draft, it was very much put at the forefront in the discussion?

The Chief Minister:

It would have been very early on in the discussions, yes. Then for the rest of the States Members it all appeared in the documents that were presented to the States.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Yes. It is just making sure that it is part of the process rather than a retrofit.

Treasurer of the States:

It was literally in the very first workshop.

The Chief Minister:

Yes.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Was anything done differently within this, looking at sustainable well-being, that was different than, say, the last Budget? Is this kind of a set process? Did you feel that there needed to be some tweaking to make sure that it was really embedded in the discussions?

The Chief Minister:

I think the principles were the same when we are looking at the areas that we prioritise for sustainable well-being. So some of the priorities change but they are all founded in the key principles.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I know we have talked a little bit about risk and, of course, risk in the Budget is kind of split up under sustainable well-being in the different areas. How did that happen when taking ... the risk ... because, of course, it does not necessarily mean that these are all the risks that you have on the risk register, but how are they chosen to be kind of put up front into the Budget that these are the risks that need to be highlighted, I suppose? Just noting, for example, that health and safety is mentioned twice in 2 different sections of the well-being, under community and also under economic. So it is just understanding how they are split.

The Chief Minister:

I mean, as I said before, the risk management is embedded in the process and all of our aspirations and priorities and budgeting is aimed at improving Island outcomes, improving life for Islanders, reducing risks, reducing financial risks, reducing risks around health and safety, which is why you will see additional investment into various ...

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I am just wondering why that these specific risks were picked out versus, you know, there are a number of other risks that we see and that we hear even in other panels or Ministers saying. So I was just wondering why these risks. Are the Ministers given all the risks that they possibly could in

the register and said, okay, these are the ones we really want to focus on in overcoming or taking into consideration?

Chief Executive Officer:

So what the Council of Ministers did through a series of workshops was receive the advice from our risk professionals and our top risks are cyber defence, management of health and safety as you mentioned, failure of front line I.T. (information technology) services, fire service capacity, energy resilience. In all of these areas there are elements within the Budget that were mapped against them but risk is just one set of indicators. Then, as we discussed before, we have to compare those with a number of others, including our own Island outcome indicators and the feedback from the election, polling and wider work that we produce from a policy perspective.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think you have mentioned the Island outcome indicators, which obviously is mapping whether the previous Government term ... well, since sustainable well-being became an important factor within the Public Finance Law, that actually are we making progress against sustainable well-being ...

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

... the outcome indicators are supposed to do that. Are you satisfied, Chief Minister, that the outcome indicators is collecting enough data, is showing the progress made, is being utilised to the best it can so that you know that the ... you can see that there has actually been advances in sustainable well-being?

The Chief Minister:

Well, I am satisfied in areas where there have been advances but, for example, there are still challenges where we have been working to make progress. Affordability, for example. Life has not become necessarily more affordable in every aspect. You could argue that if we had not taken some of the action we had taken it would be even less affordable. So there are still areas. There are constant challenges in certain areas and that is where we tend to focus as a Government is addressing and trying to ease those challenges.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I suppose it is trying to make sure that every Budget and C.S.P. is showing outcomes.

The Chief Minister:

Well, yes.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think that it is trying to ... my question, I suppose, is trying to ensure that there is building from the last Budget and the last C.S.P. I know there was 2 before in the last term, but have there been improvements? Can you see there being improvements?

Assistant Chief Minister:

The data sources that we use are the Jersey Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, the Household Income and Spending Survey and the Children and Young People Survey, which scans that landscape of affordability, quality of life on Jersey, opportunities for young people. All that feeds into the continual thinking and, of course, the actions that we took in the last Budget will show through and shine through these data sources and these documents to show the positive impact or otherwise that it is actually having.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

That is interesting because, of course, that is different than the Island outcome indicators.

Assistant Chief Minister:

It is.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

So it is very specific to the Future Jersey and it was very linked. Does that mean that we are moving away from the outcome indicators as the main source?

The Chief Minister:

No, not really. I think we are just ...

Assistant Chief Minister:

Part of the picture.

The Chief Minister:

We are just saying there is a range of statistical reports and statistics that we utilise. You may recognise that this is not a dissimilar format to the previous C.S.P. and the previous C.S.P. was quite a departure from previous C.S.P.s. It was a smaller document, a bit more focused and presenting a list of targeted actions that we could tangibly achieve. You will see some of the themes continued where we have made good progress previously; for example, childcare, additional support for childcare, we have continued that. School lunches, et cetera, we have continued some of those

themes. Because in the past I have seen C.S.P.s completely change from one Government to another and not really relate to some of that work. I think that can stall things if you ... we have seen it before when new Governments come in and cancel projects and things like that. So we have tried to keep it fluid.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Tried to on that ... and I suppose then it is that underlying using the Jersey performance framework, using those outcome indicators, and the previous panel's review found that outcomes-based accountability was not consistent throughout the different departments, meaning that trying to identify those outcomes and that progress being made on different ... I know we are mentioning affordability a lot and specifically but there is a number. There are 11 priorities now in this draft C.S.P. and there should be that outcomes-based accountability consistently across departments. The panel found that the Government partner agencies were required to do outcome-based accountability but departments are not. Has there been a discussion to enhance that outcome-based accountability so we really can see this progress?

The Chief Minister:

It is something we talked about towards the end of the last Government and I know the Chief Executive is wanting to see more continuity about those, how those are reported, and that is something he is working on.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

That is good to know. We will definitely ask more about that later. It was noted in the Ministerial response to the previous review again coming back to that Future Jersey vision, so that wider 30-year vision, may warrant revisiting in a future Government to refresh that long-term vision. Do you see that you are the Chief Minister that will look into that Future Jersey? Would that be linked to that 3-year cycle potentially of the Budget?

The Chief Minister:

It will certainly be discussed by this Government. We discussed it in the last Government and I think probably the Government before that and the one before that. We deemed that the key areas were still relevant. I suspect it will need a review and need some fine tuning during this term of Government but I cannot confirm that because we have not really turned to that.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Would that be something that you would be driving as the Chief Minister? Is that where it sits in your ...?

The Chief Minister:

I guess so, unless anybody else wants to do it. Volunteers welcome. **[Laughter]**

Chief Executive Officer:

As we have discussed in this panel before, it does take us out to 2037 anyway so it would have to be something significantly material that would warrant that. I think it is a very good document; it was a very good process. We will ...

The Chief Minister:

We review it from time to time but nothing really jumped out that we think needs changing at this stage.

[11:45]

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I think that is where we are trying to gather kind of how all these bits, elements, fit together so that you have the continuity which, Chief Minister, you have said about that, C.S.P. and budget, that it links to that. So I think that we will be asking more questions on that.

The Chief Minister:

Sure.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

What specifically ... and then, of course, it all comes down to data. So what statistical data was used when developing the Budget? Did it all feed in from this data that you can see a picture of where to prioritise?

The Chief Minister:

So financial statistics, Richard, if you wanted to share some of your ... how you model, and then there are the, shall we call them, social statistics we can talk about.

Treasurer of the States:

Well, I think if we are talking about the priorities within the Budget that reach across the C.S.P.s, one place you could start really in terms of data is understanding the underlying data that relates to income distributions, where those particular challenges will be. Indeed, we were in costing up those measures looking at how many families we would be helping, how many children we would be helping. So that is one example of how the data is used. I know we will probably get on to gender-responsive budgeting further down the line, but that is typically how we go about when we are looking

at changes to the tax system or we are looking at reform into the future. We are looking at the distribution as it impacts different families. We have the, if you like, scenario families. They are not typical families obviously but they are meant to represent typical families, 2 people working, 2 children, et cetera, and looking to see what the impacts are in the different scenarios. So that is where we use it from a developing tax or benefit measure. For example, I think I have talked through the data that we use to guide us in forecasting income. For example, we also work with departments when they are forecasting again things like benefit spend, but also in terms of looking forward with Health as to what their funding requirements will be into the future.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I suppose the last question is of course the Investing in Jersey is new, and you were talking about earlier taking that out of the central. Would that still sit within the framework of future Jersey outcome-based accountability, feed into the indicators? It is still very much part of that decision making?

The Chief Minister:

In fact, the motivation behind Investing in Jersey was not just to get better financial protection for capital investment and through the capital investment fund makes a stronger case for getting further investment, but it is because we saw our essential infrastructure and public realm, which also has an impact on the environment, starting to fall behind. So of course that works to enhance what we do in line with the community, environmental, and economic targets that we have set.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Now we are going to move on to some questions around arm's length organisations. These are the ones that are specifically dealt with by the Cabinet Office and are under your remit, Chief Officer. I am going to hand over to Deputy Rebindaine.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

So, Chief Minister, we understand that by law you have to make an annual assessment that the Chief Statistician has adequate funding. Can you outline the steps that you have taken for the 2027 Budget process to comply with the Statistics and Census (Jersey) Law 2018 and are you confident that they are adequately resourced?

The Chief Minister:

The Chief Executive Officer leads the work with the Chief Statistician on that and they have come to a mutually agreeable position, which I am satisfied ensures they have the required funding to carry out their work in line with the law. Paul, did you want to add anything?

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, I think you spoke to the Chief Statistician the other day and what he described is, since we introduced the new law, an annual process of him identifying what all of his pressures are. In my old role as accountable officer for the Cabinet Office, I would see if we could balance that within the Cabinet Office head of expenditure, and where we could not, we would discuss with the Chief Minister as to what additional pressures or growth was needed. This year, it was conducted through the same period of the Budget and I wrote to him on 29th September and recorded formally that Statistics Jersey was therefore protected from the efficiency savings that we apply to other areas of the Cabinet Office, as well as giving him assurance that we would fund the costs of the Living Costs and Household Income Survey, which will be conducted through 2027 and through 2028. We will fund out from the Cabinet Office underspends.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

So, are you both comfortable then the way this annual assessment works, I take it? So, yes, you are stealing my next question about the fact that the Cabinet Office underspends are going to go to the Household Income Survey. So, has the required funding been allocated to them to do this now?

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

It tends to operate every 5 years, whereas the election cycle is every 4. Is there a sense in trying to sync it so that ...

The Chief Minister:

We have had this discussion with the Chief Statistician because understanding household income is a key part of understanding the problem around affordability and the cost of living. We would be open to maybe looking at the cycle, but as the statisticians pointed out, this is a large piece of work, an 18-month collation of a compressed period. But we are open to that and I think, with hindsight, it might have been more useful to have that survey completed by the early part of 2027 to help inform the 3-year Budget, but we are not at that position unfortunately. But it is certainly something we will bear in mind for the future and, given the importance of it, we can certainly review and have those conversations with the Statistics Unit.

Chief Executive Officer:

If I could, there is more that we can do with administrative data, as it is called, and I have given the Chief Statistician a roving brief to provide some advice to the executive leadership team what else you could use with administrative data in order to get more frequent ...

The Chief Minister:

They can also do some interim modelling on those reports and, while they are not as accurate, they generally give a good feel for ...

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

In terms of other arm's-length organisations under the responsibility of the Cabinet Office, what processes were followed to determine the budgets for them as listed in the service level and analysis table in the annex on page 11? So there is Care Commission, Children's Commissioner, and such like.

Chief Executive Officer:

So, in my role as accountable officer for the Cabinet Office, I have quarterly meetings with each of those groups. They are all slightly different. So, to go through them in turn, the Care Commission we discussed whether and how they can undertake further efficiency savings as part of part of their work. With the Charity Commission, that is funded slightly differently. It is funded from dormant bank accounts, so it effectively appears as a zero on the head of expenditure. The Children's Commissioner, the Chief Minister, Council of Ministers, sought to protect the budget, so that is another area, as with Stats Jersey, that has not been changed and the Chief Minister met with the Children's Commissioner last week to give her that news. In the final areas, the Jersey Advisory and Conciliatory Service, which is a slightly different system because it is a grant, they are not States Employment Board bodies, so that will go up in line with inflation.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Where there are decreases in 2027 as opposed to 2026, you have said about trying to manage costs, so I get the rationale, but how do you establish what service delivery implications it will have?

Chief Executive Officer:

So it is fairly limited in those arm's-length organisations that we just mentioned because it only really applies to the Care Commission, but for the other policy directorates, the communications and ministerial support, the governance at the centre, yes, we are working our way through that. We have underspends in the Cabinet Office anyway because we have been seeking to not backfill as vacancies arise, and so largely it is achievable within the savings that we have already found.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Have any of these organisations expressed any concerns as to how 2027 is going to look for them?

Chief Executive Officer:

I have discussed it with the Chair of the Care Commission and Chief Executive of the Care Commission. They have not said they cannot do it. They said of course it will be a risk-based process and we will continue to monitor on that quarterly basis.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

Okay. Finally, Chief Minister, we know the line in the annex for the Public Services Ombudsman with an allocation of £385,000. Are you able to update us on any developments regarding the establishment of this during the Government term following the review undertaken in the last Government's term reported on in March of this year?

The Chief Minister:

No, that is something that the new Government has not discussed yet. In fact, it was discussed briefly with Assistant Ministers this morning and that is going to be tabled for discussion with the Council of Ministers in due course.

Deputy C.J. Rebindaine:

So, you have 2 and a half people allocated in the budget for 2027, so is there a logic for that?

Chief Executive Officer:

It is notional.

The Chief Minister:

Yes, and in fairness, it is right to put it before. We discussed this on a number of occasions - former Deputy Scott produced a report towards the end of the last term - but we were too close then to the election and the formation of the new Government. So that is something for the Government to consider in Q4. I cannot say when, but we have asked for it to be put on the agenda for discussion. Then the new Government will agree a course of action and we will inform the Assembly accordingly. There are a number of different views on it, about whether we should have it, whether we should not and, if we do have it, what size and shape it takes. Those are the sort of areas we need to discuss.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. We are going to now move on to discussing accessibility and transparency of the proposed Budget and gender-responsive budgeting as well. Deputy Carpenter will take those questions.

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

Chief Minister, could you update us on the Government's communication of the proposed Budget and whether any further initiatives are planned ahead of the debate on the proposition?

The Chief Minister:

Yes. Malcolm, you start on your areas, and then I will come back in.

Assistant Chief Minister:

Firstly, we have produced a child-friendly version and we have run that past the Schools Council network to gauge young people's opinion and to clearly communicate to young people how the Budget affects everyday life. So it is in a very accessible, readable format for everyone. I think the adult version, if you like, is as readable as possible and as understandable as possible, and we will continue with those communication channels as far as that goes. In relation to gender-responsive budgeting, it is fair to start from the point that the Assembly has not agreed to adopt that approach.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I will just stop you there because the question was specifically around communications. We will move on to questions about gender-responsive budgeting.

The Chief Minister:

I will just pick up on where Malcolm left off. I sometimes wonder whether we should not start with the youth-friendly budget and then make it more complicated from there. Because it is a technical financial document that carries legal consequences, it is presented in its legally required format, but we try to include as much information within that as possible. For example, detail on departmental budgets, growth allocations, are all published in the annex, which is always useful I think. Deputy Ferey mentioned the youth-friendly budget. Printed copies of the Budgets are available in all the parish halls and the Government building. HTML version of the budget is published and available online. It is publicly scrutinised, as we are doing now, at meetings with a number of different Ministers. The communication plans, we have a communication plan for the Budget, which includes States Members, businesses, media briefings, and that is ongoing. We have meetings and briefings for stakeholders and internally we have workshops for States Members. We are due to have one next week, I think, or the week after, for States Members. So that is just some of the areas where we talk about the communications.

[12:00]

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

You have also mentioned the youth-friendly version of the Budget. Have there been any other steps taken to engage with children and young people outside of that process? I know you mentioned schools, for example. Have you ...

The Chief Minister:

I understand that the Education Outreach Team have been discussing it, I think initially with the new Youth Assembly.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

That is work that we are doing, Chief Minister. We are asking about the work that you are doing.

The Chief Minister:

All right, okay, fine. I thought you were talking about the overall. That is all part. If we did not produce a budget, that work would not be done. So I was just raising that, not to claim credit for it, but just to answer the question. So the Government, I am not sure if the Government or any Ministers will want to cross-cut that work that is being done by the Education Outreach Programme. But that is, I believe, how we reach out with Government documents to schools largely.

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

How are you ensuring inclusive communications and engagements on the proposals more generally?

Assistant Chief Minister:

The child-friendly version is as inclusive as you can get. I think that speaks to everybody. Anyone can pick that up, read it ...

The Chief Minister:

Like I said, it is difficult, because legally we have to produce a technical document. But I am not sure what you mean by inclusive.

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

Well, for example, is anything produced in other languages perhaps?

The Chief Minister:

Right, okay. Treasurer?

Treasurer of the States:

I do not believe we currently do. So that is something to consider further down the line. It is quite more straightforward with technology to do that now.

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

Is any consideration given to disability access, anything of that nature at all?

Chief Executive Officer:

Sight impaired, braille, read aloud copies. I do not know if that is communicated in that way.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

You mentioned about versions online. Do you know whether that is readable by accessible readers, for example?

Chief People Officer:

Yes, there is a framework in terms of when we publish to make sure that it is fully accessible.

The Chief Minister:

Most computer programs now allow an audio readout of those documents.

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

Moving on to gender-responsive budgeting, as you mentioned, the previous Corporate Services Panel recommended introducing gender-responsive budgeting, which the Government chose to reject, citing that protected characteristics are already considered as defined under the Discrimination Law. What additional analysis is undertaken to assess the distributional impacts of the Budget?

Assistant Chief Minister:

So, all departments, when they submit parts of the Budget, go through a policy submission template which has an evaluation, an equality impact evaluation attached to it. I think the thing with gender-responsive budgeting, in simple terms, it is a budget that works for everybody. So, I am confident that we do not just adhere to the Discrimination Law and those protected characteristics, but we try to make a Budget which is inclusive and works for everybody. Perhaps we just do not demonstrate that as well as we could. So what we do plan to do, if we move to the 3-year term, is start it from the bottom of the process rather than kind of retrofit it, so that thinking is embedded throughout the whole of the process. A lot of the time we are doing it; we are perhaps just not demonstrating that we are doing it.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Sorry, did you just say that you retrofit it?

Assistant Chief Minister:

Well, what I am saying is when you do it the way that we have a continual budgeting process at the moment and we have not included it yet, we have to look ahead and we have to fit it from the bottom.

The Chief Minister:

We do not retrofit; we spoke about this briefly this morning. Moving forward, I think there is a positive approach now, although the States have not adopted gender-responsive budgeting. We did not want to retrofit it. It needs to be done from the conception of the Budget is what we are saying for the future.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Can I just ask on that, does it need to be accepted, like as agreed? Is it not a part of sustainable well-being in future generations? It is about looking at it, as the Assistant Chief Minister says, it is about looking ...

The Chief Minister:

I think the answer to that is no, but it is not a formally adopted procedure at the moment. We can formally adopt that I suppose.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

But it is something that you would be looking to formally adopt?

The Chief Minister:

We are considering that currently.

Assistant Chief Minister:

For the 3-year budgeting.

The Chief Minister:

Yes.

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

Are you able to provide any examples of how key budget measures affect different groups within the occupations?

Assistant Chief Minister:

I think a lot of the measures that we have taken have been aimed at families, that part of the community where we are deliberately trying to support, because we recognise the challenges for young families, people wanting to raise children, are particularly stark at the moment. So lots of the measures that we have taken have been aimed at that particular group, so that is a good example of ...

The Chief Minister:

As a general point, policy should always consider the impact on different sexes, males, females, intersex, albeit there is no overarching policy clear objective of the moment. But we ensure that our policy does not directly discriminate against anyone. So that is sort of where we are working at. We have non-discriminatory policies so we try to make it as balanced as we possibly can. But there is no specific gender-responsive budgeting as such.

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

So do you therefore think that consideration of the Discrimination Law alone adequately addresses the impact of proposals on all segments of our community?

The Chief Minister:

The way that we do it works well, but I accept we can improve the outcomes for certain Islanders if we were to progress that line of thought.

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

So, for the benefit of anyone listening who may not be overly familiar with the concepts of gender-responsive budgeting, an example of a situation it might seek to address would be where entitlements to State benefits or pensions are often tied to full-time paid employment over a lifetime. Women who work in the informal economy, or who do not work full-time all their lives due to caring for children or family members, may not qualify for these benefits to the same extent as men. So, are situations like this taken into consideration currently when developing current policy and the Budget?

The Chief Minister:

Internally, where are we at with that?

Chief People Officer:

So, just in terms of we appreciate ... so from a Government point of view and from public servants, the highest group that are part-time workers are female workers because they predominantly have responsibility for caring. So that is taken into consideration. But from more of a Government and pension point of view in Social Security, I would not be able to answer that question. I would not know. But from our public service employees, then, yes, we do take those into consideration and we do quite a lot of work in terms of facilitating that. In terms of the Budget at the moment, I think with the measures that have been taken it does help support those individuals that want to work extra hours with the nursery allowances.

Deputy L.D. Carpenter:

Finally, are policies and budget spend outcomes monitored to analyse how they might affect inequalities between genders or different societal groups at all?

The Chief Minister:

Paul, would you state where we are with that line of thought?

Chief Executive Officer:

So, what we are describing is positive elements particularly for the new policies where we are kind of identifying a change and being very clear in the initial submission what the effect is likely to be. You have then got, as the Chief Minister was describing, a 3-year budget process, which is incoming, which allows us to look at least in the areas of significant growth or change, applying more of a gender-responsive lens to those issues. It would be very difficult to do that for the entirety of the Government's expenditure in the same way that zero-based budgeting is incredibly difficult and does not often work. So, just to kind of match expectations, we are looking at areas of growth or significant change and applying it for that.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. Now we are going to move on to looking at non-Ministerial departments' budget allocations and Deputy Leck is going to lead on that.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

So, what steps were taken for the non-Ministerial departments to request funding through the budget process and how has it ensured those requests were appropriately considered and funded?

Treasurer of the States:

So, it is largely something undertaken through the Treasury. That is informed by meetings with A.O.s (accountable officers) from those departments. We had got ahead of, in particular relating to the impacts arising from new legislation in respect of violence against women and girls, in terms of the modelling or the forecasting, if you like, of the number of additional cases that will go through the court process. On top of that, the Minister has also written to those departments as well. So, through those processes, we gather what additional funds have been required and, secondly, inviting them in respect of whether they are able to make contributions to the wider savings programme.

The Chief Minister:

Just for information, it might be worth noting that, while all Government departments are beginning to resize and look to become lean and efficient, I think of all the letters we wrote, I think only one

non-Ministerial department agreed to make any contribution to that. That is not a criticism, of course, because the non-Ministerial departments have a level of autonomy. So, if we decided we wanted to impose reductions on non-Ministerial departments, we would have to take that to the Assembly, and we decided not to do that in this Budget.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

Okay. So, were there any growth bids that came in from the non-Ministerial departments and, conversely, were there any that gave you some savings?

Treasurer of the States:

So, there are the growth bids associated with violence against women and girls, those are included in the Budget. They are in 2 places, one in base budgets, both in Ministerial and non-Ministerial departments, an additional amount sitting in reserves as we see how many cases come through and what the additional costs, as we see the number of cases increase, obviously these are forecasted areas. There was one additional growth bid. I cannot remember it off the top of my head, so I would have to come back to you on that individual item. Some departments have and some departments have not been able to contribute to the savings programme, but they have written back to the Minister for Treasury and Resources with those responses, But what I would say is, if any growth bid was put in by a Ministerial department, the requirements of the legislation require them to be included in the Budget.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

Similarly, the non-Ministerial departments.

Treasurer of the States:

The non-Ministerial departments.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

As the Minister for Treasury and Resources indicated, he then weighed up the growth bids against where savings are going to be made elsewhere, so primarily that was the Minister for Treasury and Resources' responsibility for dealing with growth bids and savings.

Treasurer of the States:

Yes, it is largely done through the Minister for Treasury and Resources, but it is discussed at the Council of Ministers as well in pulling together the Budget. The point I am saying is Council of Ministers cannot decide whether those growth bids go into the Budget, they have to go into the Budget, but the Council of Ministers could - in this particular year, there are not large ones other

than those arising from that new legislation - could decide if they disagreed and lodge an amendment.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

I just wanted to pick up on a few points around prioritisation and resourcing.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

In relation to the public sector as a whole.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

Yes. So, when reprioritising departmental expenditure plans for 2027, presumably these were agreed at the Council of Ministers' Budget meetings.

The Chief Minister:

Yes.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

Yes, okay. Then, are there any examples that you can point to in that process where projects and services were deprioritised to increase funding elsewhere, and what assessments of the risks and trade-offs took place? For instance, the delay in the whistleblowing legislation as one example.

[12:15]

The Chief Minister:

I cannot think of any instances where existing services were significantly disadvantaged, because that has been at the heart of this, is to protect the key services and improve where we can. The general policy has been to reduce the cost in the centre of the public service and then share or pass greater resources to the front lines, which we have seen. The reason why the public sector is essentially now static in terms of F.T.E. and headcount, notwithstanding we have seen somewhere between 300 and 400 reductions in senior civil service posts, those have been taken up by front line teaching and health staff.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

So you do not anticipate any negative service impact of the funding decisions?

The Chief Minister:

We are not anticipating, and that has been the key request to officials, to make sure that is the case.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Deputy Leck, can I ask a further question on that?

Deputy C.D. Leck:

Sure.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Just because, of course, we talk about projects or services, but services is done by people and obviously if we have a recruitment freeze, that means though people are leaving naturally or because of retirement or other things, is there always an assessment of whether to refill that post and not have a freeze on that, because of course that naturally will deprioritise whatever service it is?

The Chief Minister:

The policy generally, we can replace staff on a like-for-like basis. Lesley, can you please expand on that?

Chief People Officer:

Yes. So, if it is a like for like, then departments can ask to recruit, especially if it has an impact on services. So, essential front line posts, they automatically go through, but if somebody is looking to recruit into a new post that has not been budgeted or F.T.E., then they have to fill in the business case and outline why that is the case and then they are reviewed.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Okay. So, if it is, for example, in the Regulation Department under consumer health, if there is somebody leaving for whatever reason, then that role would automatically be said, yes, that is a green light to go through because that was an essential service for consumer protection?

Chief People Officer:

Yes. So, if it is a like-for-like recruitment and there is no other way of doing that role, then they put the word in and it is considered and approved if it is like-for-like recruitment.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

Finally, from my point of view, I wanted to look at an aspect of saving proposals and their impact. So, can you update us on the delivery of the £20 million, which was approved as savings in 2026, and have those been delivered, and what was the impact of those savings on service delivery and operations?

The Chief Minister:

Paul, do you want to take that?

Treasurer of the States:

So, broadly on track across those departments, still some work to do in one or 2 of those departments, or a minority of those departments. But broadly on track towards delivery of the savings. In particular, outside of that, we meet regularly to discuss with H.C.J. (Health and Care Jersey) their progress on their F.R.P. (Financial Recovery Plan) in year, and so that is slightly behind track, but we have work being done to pull that back in as well. So it is not what I would call a mixed bag, the majority that has been delivered, and we can see that there is work being done to make sure we get to the end of the year and deliver the target, or at least live within the financial envelope for the departments.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

With the H.C.J. programme, then I can see that you have got estimates for 2027, but not beyond that, so does that mean that you envisage that being completed in 2027?

Treasurer of the States:

There is targets were set, the F.R.P. was over a specified period of time, we will now be working as part of the health care funding work on what any future contributions to the savings, or the additional funding required within Health, any savings programme will play.

Deputy C.D. Leck:

Okay, because I noticed that there is quite an increase in terms of the H.C.J. for 2027 compared to 2026 and previously.

Treasurer of the States:

Largely, that has been as savings have been undelivered in previous programmes rather than hiking up for that last year, so that has meant that last year is higher. I think we are talking 2026 rather than 2027, which is why in particular we are working with H.C.J. to make sure that can be delivered.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Deputy Jeune.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

I was just wondering, before we carry on from that, and apologies if that is what you were trying to say, is that obviously in the 2026 Budget it says savings for 2027 would be £29 million, but we now have discussed the fact that now in this Budget it is £10 million, but then £20 million overall in what

we see in table 11 and 12. So I was wondering, what is the difference with that forecast £29 million savings last year?

Treasurer of the States:

So, there is an overlap across the 2. The remaining balance is addressed among other parts of the plan, so things change. The forecast for inflation changed, et cetera, so there are changes that we made within the plan. As you say, that was a plan in Budget 2026 for 2027, whereas this is the plan for 2027, and these measures, along with the other adjustments within the Budget, deliver the balanced budget for 2027.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

So that £9 million is just because of reassessing and interest?

Treasurer of the States:

It is provided for within reserve funding, so when we take into account how much money we have allocated for inflation and pay in other areas, we have taken that into account.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Okay. I suppose this comes back to a little bit with what I was asking before, when Deputy Leck was asking questions about these measures of savings, which a lot of it is related to the roles, how to ensure that it does not adversely affect that critical public services; how do you ensure that can be making those savings but at the same time making sure that it does not affect the services?

Treasurer of the States:

So, the targets themselves for the departments, the allocations by departments, were done through looking in particular at, not front line services in particular among that within the growth in the civil service over the periods since 2018 in particular. So we looked firstly where we can see a growth over that period in roles related to governance, and by that we do not mean governance relating to the front line, more internal governance and administration. But also, as in previous years, then on top of that being informed by the growth in civil service roles over a grade 9, and in this particular instance to allocate those savings across. We have given a degree of flexibility for A.O.s to deliver that in particular in the first year for 2027, because this work was originally looking towards 2028 and beyond, with considering which roles. But in some cases that might in the first year not be roles with a longer-term commitment to deliver those through role savings.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Just within this context of this discussion, Chief Minister, I am just going to revisit something that we spoke about earlier, which is how things were prioritised and what has possibly stopped or will stop

as a result of these. Because of course these reductions in F.T.E.s, these people were not sitting around in offices doing nothing, they were undertaking functions and roles. So what has been reprioritised and what direction have you given Ministers around how they should do that reprioritisation?

The Chief Minister:

It has been right across the public service.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Right across the public service, people do not just disappear.

The Chief Minister:

So the brief provided by the Government and States Employment Board was to seek out duplication, repetition, areas where we can be leaner. There is a bit of culture developed in the past where we sort of became ensconced in doing things because we have always done it that way. The brief also was not to lose any services, or any key services, in fact to improve services where we can. So that was essentially the brief. I am not aware, there might be some departments where people have left, they have not been replaced, because we have shared out the work with other members and so forth.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Has it led to an increase in overtime at all?

The Chief Minister:

Not to the latest overtime.

Chief People Officer:

No, so I have got the latest overtime, but we have not seen a significant increase in overtime at all. Last year it reduced.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. Maybe that is something that we can suggest other Scrutiny Panels ask specific departments about.

The Chief Minister:

We were keen to make sure we did not see deficits in service anywhere and we have been monitoring it closely. We have a monthly dashboard of performance results and they have been holding up very well so far.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, and staff well-being as well.

Chief People Officer:

I was just going to say, in terms of the question before, what we do consider when people are asking for permission to recruit into post, what is the impact on employee well-being, if it is going to have a significant impact. So that is one of the questions that we do ask and take into consideration when people are asking to recruit.

The Chief Minister:

Also, currently how is morale generally and the measures on that, is it all good?

Chief People Officer:

So, yes, we have got an engagement survey that will be going live in 2027, we will be able to monitor that, and we have done pockets of reviews and generally it has been positive.

The Chief Minister:

It has been positive.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

The Treasurer talked a bit about the savings were mainly focused around the higher grades and also the governance, so that it is in the Budget, it says: "Governance co-ordination and business support roles have increased faster." So those are the areas that were, I guess, being targeted. Is it the right assumption that those are the roles where the savings are going to be the most, is around governance co-ordination and business support roles?

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes. What we are talking about is 2 different things. We have been talking about the 2026 savings, and for 2025, which were reductions in a number of central departments. Then, as you are describing there, that is the 2027 £10 million of efficiency savings, of which is geared towards governance and administration, yes.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Okay. So this is a separate focus on this business support role co-ordination and governance?

Chief Executive Officer:

Yes, and it all flowed from the work that we did to understand what it was that grew between 2018 and 2024 and why that happened and, if we were minded to reform it, how might you do that while protecting the front line, as the Chief Minister described.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

A lot of have talked about the fact that, since 2018, there has been a number of things, Brexit, COVID, et cetera, but Brexit which means there is more focus or it has got more complicated, I guess, Government has become more complicated, which means governance needs to be strengthened to ensure there is that accountability, transparency, I suppose going back to those outcome indicators, making sure that their role has outcome-based accountability. How is that going to be maintained with the fact that there is a reduction in roles of those specifically looking at governance; how is that now being integrated?

Chief Executive Officer:

So, the Treasurer and I are chairing meetings to determine what is it within the Public Finances Manual and our guidance that is driving some of these behaviours, particularly around accountable officers having support in each of their areas to be able to demonstrate this. Are they necessary and can they be reduced as requirements? Then that allows accountable officers then to reprioritise those staff and that work towards the C.S.P. priorities.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

We note that the Central Reserve holds additional funds for 2027, so additional £5 million, increasing contingency funding to £10 million. It is noted that some demand and implementation timelines remain uncertain for emerging policy priorities, which we have talked about, which could result in expenditure pressures. Could you identify what pressures have been identified as emerging or uncertain for 2027, and will these limitations be mitigated from the reserve alone? So, is there any specific pressures that you see?

The Chief Minister:

Just to try and save Richard, who can probably answer them technically better, but priorities remain. If we are looking at the political and the lived landscape, the demographic landscape challenges are remaining in the provision of health and care. Given the change in demographic, that is going to be ongoing pressure for the foreseeable future.

[12:30]

The other areas where we are going to have to carefully prioritise is in capital expenditure and the implementation of the Investing in Jersey programme, which is quite broad, we are going to have

to decide as a Government, as an Assembly, how we implement that. The balance will be of surpluses or windfalls, tax windfalls, for example, with Pillar 2. While the direction of travel is to utilise the windfalls for the health stabilisation fund and the Investing in Jersey programme, we must not lose sight of the fact that there are social challenges as well and we need to provide the right balance. So I think that is where the juxtaposition will remain.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Yes, and I suppose that is the last question on that, because that is interesting, saying, yes, though you have identified that this is where these funding extras ...

The Chief Minister:

That we know about.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

... maybe these pressures will change and, even in the Investing in Jersey, though we only have seen a little bit of what potentially that could go for, because in the C.S.P. we only see upgrading sports and leisure facilities and community spaces, we have no detail of what the next is.

The Chief Minister:

It is designed to be quite broad because it refers to the Investing in Jersey programme, which is a separate, slightly more detailed document, and the health and care facilities are part of that programme.

Deputy H.L. Jeune:

Yes. So, I suppose in these pressures that we have just talked about, how do you ensure there is risk mitigation strategies? Where is the point where there has to be that decision to change tack?

The Chief Minister:

Of course, if we go back to risk being embedded in our processes, I think when you are looking at health, you want to minimise the risk and enhance longevity and well-being and quality of life as we all get older. Those are the principles that underpin the current health facilities and programme with the new hospital and what is being proposed to address that. Of course, we are hoping, with the money invested in the hospital technology projects, new facilities, and better working practices, that the cost of running the service in context, in real terms, will stabilise and will not continue to increase. One of the reasons we have got such high costs is we are trying to run progressively growing and expanding health care out of unsuitable facilities.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay. Are there any questions that any other panel members wish to ask the Chief Minister?

Deputy C.D. Leck:

I suppose the only comment I would like to make, just going back to the Chief Minister saying that this Budget is a transitional Budget, and we understand all the reasons for that, and then if you look to the C.S.P., then there seemed to be quite a number of things in terms of priorities which you are not going to see in 2027. So, for instance, I am not sure we are going to see any new sports stadia or sports facilities. I wondered whether, in your introductions to both documents, that you could make that clear, and then saying that you then want to do these things in 2028 to 2030, but you have obviously got to find the resources and find the growth. I also think when people look at the Budget they will see there is no growth in income when obviously that is an aspiration for the Minister for Economic Development. So I just wondered whether you could elaborate on that when the final documents are produced, so people have perhaps a clearer understanding of it.

The Chief Minister:

When we write forewords and introductions, we tend to write them for our colleagues, because if you are involved in the process there is an understanding of that. But you are right, there is a period of negotiation, political negotiation, around those issues. We have to decide how we prioritise expenditure and how we decide to utilise surpluses. Those are the conversations I am having with new Members and new Ministers who quite rightly say: "We want to build new facilities", and we have the capability to do that, but it is about what we build, what gets priority, and how the democratic process works. Some of us want more sports facilities, some of us want better roads, some of us want improvement to the public realm. We all want different things and we cannot all have what we want, so we have to find a compromise. We should also make clear that the C.S.P. is a document that deals with some short-term things we can deal with in the short term. Some of them, especially Investing in Jersey, are projects that run over an 8, 10, 12-year period. So, when we refer to them and hear what we are talking about, the ones that we decide to go ahead with, we need to get them started, but they will be continuous and we need to perhaps make them clearer.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Chief Minister, you have just described the C.S.P. as a short-term document, although it does ...

The Chief Minister:

No, I do not think I did.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Yes, I just wanted to check that because ...

The Chief Minister:

That was not my intention. I said the C.S.P. is a medium-term document, it provides a plan, what we want to achieve in the 4 years of this Government. That is not just what we want to achieve in full; it is what we want to start and get going. So, we will achieve the majority of it, and an achievement is, for example with sports facilities, it is not necessarily completing all the sports facilities, new sports facilities you want to in 4 years, it is getting them under way.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

I just think it is important to acknowledge it as a 4-year document, because that is quite a different document to the type of document that you produced last time when you were Chief Minister. Obviously the C.S.P. was a 2-and-a-half-year document, so obviously the expectations are quite different this time around.

The Chief Minister:

Should we call it a medium-term document, shall we agree on that?

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

It is your document, Chief Minister. Just to note, before we close this hearing, we are aware as a panel obviously that you do have ongoing digital capital projects. Rather than ask questions in this hearing, what we have chosen to do is follow that up in writing. We are very aware that these are live projects, so of course the panel does have expectations that you will be receiving regular reports on those projects and that you will be able to make some of those reports available to us.

The Chief Minister:

Absolutely.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Just in terms of some of the answers to questions today, I noted that very often the Chief Executive referenced slides from the Council of Ministers Budget workshops. Now, obviously the C.S.S.P. (Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel) gets the agendas of Council of Ministers meetings, but we do not get the slides from Budget workshops, so I was going to ask you if you would be prepared to make sure that the panel receives copies of those slides from those workshops.

The Chief Minister:

I do not see a problem with that. We will take that away, yes.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Then, also, the Assistant Chief Minister mentioned policy submission templates that were put forward, and again I think that would be useful for the panel to get sight of.

Chief Executive Officer:

If I may, we have provided that to this panel - I am sure your clerks have it - in terms of those already, but I am happy to do it again.

Deputy L.V. Feltham:

Okay, just to be clear. I am sifting through the documentation, and of course as we see that there might be gaps in documentation that we have, we will make requests to your officers as required. Because it is important that we are able to scrutinise the Budget fully. Okay, with that then, and as there are not any other questions from the panel, I will bring this hearing to a close. I will thank the Chief Minister, the Assistant Chief Minister and his officers for making the time to come to us today, and also of course thank the supporting staff that we have from the States Greffe as well.

The Chief Minister:

Thank you all very much, thank you.

[12:39]