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PRESS RELEASE

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Opposition figures on expenditure are inaccurate and misleading

Mr Feetham recently stated on GBC and has repeated in a Press Release that the Expenditure of No 6 Convent Place, the Chief Minister's Office for 2013/14 was 45% higher than the sum provided in the Approved Estimates and that Expenditure in that year for all Government Departments was £50M higher than the amount estimated.

The GSD in Government regularly exceeded their Budget Estimates but always rubbished any criticism by saying Estimates are just that, Estimates and not sums that had to be adhered to, so they are in no position to criticise any spending in excess of the Estimates.

However in any event their criticism is complete nonsense because the figures they quote are all wrong.

The use of No 6 as an example reveals that they are deliberately trying to mislead people. A percentage increase in one Department is meaningless since it is only relevant if other Departments are also spending more and not less than the original provision.

The total Budget Estimate for 2013/14 for all Government Departments was £392.1 and the Forecast Expenditure came to £409.6M which is 4.5% higher than estimated and not 45%.

Moreover almost all the extra spending was in the area of Utilities mainly fuel costs which are impossible to predict. Excluding this element, the £343.3M Estimates for the rest of Government Departments was exceeded was by £2.3M an increase of 0.67%.

So it is not true that the Expenditure of Government Departments finished up £50M higher than estimated, nor is there any credibility in the insinuation that the costs overrun were of the order of 45%.

Clearly there is nothing abnormal in one Department spending more than expected and another one spending less. This happens regularly and has happened every year under every Government.